



Diabetes  
New Zealand

# Christmas holiday eating tips

At the best of times it can be hard to resist the tasty treats in life but at Christmas it is even tougher. Christmas pudding and other sweet temptations can test those with the strongest of resolve!

The general advice for a healthy balanced diet is that it's best to limit treats and high fat takeaways to no more than once a fortnight. During the Christmas and New Year period, eating more sweets could result in higher blood glucose levels as well as you gaining some extra weight.

A good thing to remember during the festive season is to check your blood glucose level before you decide to have a treat. If your blood sugar is already high, delay eating something sweet. You may also find that a sweet treat eaten with a meal in place of a dessert won't upset your blood glucose levels too much.

A good way to make it through the holiday without any complications with your diabetes is to plan ahead. Think about what you'll be doing and where you'll be going to eat and drink, and check out the options beforehand.

If eating out, choose a restaurant or café that serves a good variety of healthy options. You can also:

- Ask for your salad with dressing served on the side, so that you can control the amount you put on
- Ask for your coffee to be made with trim milk
- Eat slowly - allow time to enjoy the taste of your food.

During your holidays, remember to keep active. Balance your eating, reading and relaxing time with a good walk or other activity each day to get the blood pumping.

## Drinks tips

- Never swap alcohol for food
- Don't drink alcohol on an empty stomach
- Drink artificially sweetened drinks such as diet lemonade
- When drinking spirits, have them with water, diet drinks or soda water
- When drinking beer, choose a low alcohol, 'lite', or low calorie variety
- Try a shandy - beer with diet lemonade - as an alternative.

## Healthy Entertaining

As Christmas is the season of goodwill, you can make sure your family and friends enjoy some healthy treats too. Try these:

- Raw fruit platter
- Fruit kebabs
- Fruit loaf
- Wholegrain bread, fresh or toasted
- Low fat, high fibre crackers
- Popcorn - made without added butter
- Club sandwiches
- Raw vegetable sticks served with salsa or yoghurt dip

## Toppings for bread or crackers

Good choices include:

- Sliced tomato
- Low fat cheese
- Scraping of 'lite' cream cheese
- Cottage cheese with herbs or gherkin
- Avocado and lemon juice or lemon pepper
- Thin spread of relish or pickle
- Tomato salsa



Enjoy healthy treats at  
Christmas

Make your own pita crisps by cutting pita bread into shapes, split and spray with olive oil, sprinkle with garlic and paprika, and bake until crisp.

If you don't quite manage to follow through with your good intentions for healthy eating and being active, don't be fooled by going on a fad diet after Christmas. If you have diabetes, fad diets can be dangerous.

Here's to a happy and healthy Christmas and New Year!