



CHRISTMAS *Survival guide*

How to survive the holidays without piling on the pounds.

CHRISTMAS

Survival guide

It's that party season again! How can you have a great time without either depriving yourself or putting on lots of weight? This Christmas Survival Guide will give you some ideas for what to avoid and what fabulous healthy and delicious choices you can make in order for you to look good and feel healthy in January!

THE FUNDAMENTALS

1 Don't try to diet over the festive period. Set a maintenance goal instead. This is more realistic and much more achievable. This will give you the freedom to enjoy yourself without the feelings of deprivation or the pressure to rebel...!

4 Don't go to a party hungry. If you do, you will be getting your body's urges for sugar

5 Make good alcohol choices. Avoid creamy or sweet drinks. Try to drink with food as this will reduce the impact of the sugars on your blood stream.

8 Drink plenty of water. This will encourage you not to overeat and will also improve how you feel the next day!

2 Take low GL dishes with you to parties. There are some fab recipes in the Holford Low GL cookbook that everyone can enjoy.

Normal routine tends to go out of the window over Christmas. However, make sure you don't forget about yourself and still take the time to plan your food. That way, you will still have the right choices in the house and it will be much easier for you to succeed. At a point where we don't want to eat the wrong things it is a shame to fail just because that is all we have to hand. This is so easy to avoid just by giving it a few minutes thought and preparation. Give yourself the best chance of succeeding!

3

6 Make the effort to continue with your exercise programme. If your usual classes aren't running, choose other options instead e.g. brisk walks with friends and family.

7 Be gentle with yourself. If you do happen to overindulge, to enjoy whatever you are indulging in and get back on track afterwards.

9 Watch your portion sizes – particularly fast release carbohydrates and fats.

10 Have fun!

TOP TIP Encourage the family to get out in the fresh air with you for a morning walk - it's a great way to start the day and spend quality family time together too.

MY PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

My goals for this Christmas

HEALTH IMPROVEMENTS

WEIGHTLOSS

FITNESS

OTHER GOALS: HABITS, LIFESTYLE, WELLBEING

MY REASONS FOR WANTING TO MAKE THESE CHANGES AND IMPROVEMENTS:

MY PERSONAL WEEKLY GOALS

Weekly goals: Planning for success. Break down your long term goals into realistic steps: What will you achieve this week? Think through potential barriers to you succeeding and come up with solutions - So you are well prepared

HEALTH

Goals

Barriers

Action (what to change)

WEIGHTLOSS

Goals

Barriers

Action (what to change)

FITNESS

Goals

Barriers

Action (what to change)

REWARD

Goals

Barriers

Action (what to change)

CHRISTMAS Breakfasts

LOW GL CHRISTMAS PLATTER

You can use any combination of low GL fresh foods to make a quick, colourful, nutritious continental style breakfast such as:

- 1 slice of lean ham (ideally organic), 2 sliced tomatoes with 1 sliced apple or pear, with 8 – 10 cashew nuts or almonds and a few cherries.
- 1 kiwi fruit with 1 thin slice of cheddar or swiss cheese, 5 pecans, 5 or 6 cherry tomatoes and 1 fresh apricot
- Half a punnet of blueberries or strawberries, a handful of pumpkin seeds, 5 macadamia nuts, sliced cucumber and 1 pear.
- 2 slices of lean ham with 1 oatcake lightly spread with cream cheese, 1 sliced tomato and 2 fresh plums
- A large slice of watermelon with 1 slice of swiss cheese, 1 small apple and a few cashew nuts or almonds

FRUIT SMOOTHIES

Make with 1/2 pint semi skimmed or soya milk and half a punnet of fresh or frozen raspberries, blueberries or summer berries mixture. Add 1 heaped teaspoon of xylitol (plum sugar) to sweeten and 1 tbsp thick yoghurt to thicken if required.

COOKED BREAKFAST

- Grilled bacon, 2 grilled tomatoes, mushrooms and 1 poached egg (add a small slice of wholegrain toast or rye toast if desired)
- Smoked salmon & scrambled eggs



CHRISTMAS Breakfasts

QUICK & EASY OMLETTES

- Bacon & cherry tomato (2 eggs).
- Lean organic ham with red and yellow peppers (2 eggs)
Antioxidant rich, tasty and filling.
- Smoked salmon & cherry tomato & chives (2 eggs)
- Fresh mushroom and cream cheese (2 eggs) Lightly fry the mushrooms in a small saucepan using a little milk and then add 1 tbspc cream cheese. Meanwhile, cook the omlette and then add the mushroom filling, sprinkle with freshly ground black pepper, fold and serve.
Toss a couple of slices of red pepper or tomatoes & cucumber onto the side of plate for decoration and fibre! This is also a good option for a quick evening meal when you are tired and don't feel like cooking.



CHRISTMAS Lunches

THE LOW GL WAY

Here's a reminder of the basic low GL rules you need to apply to create a healthier plate with lower GL healthy foods

QUARTER OF YOUR PLATE: ANY PROTEIN OPTION (FISH, MEAT, VEGETARIAN, PULSES/BEANS).

HALF OF YOUR PLATE: ALL GREEN AND NON-STARCHY VEGETABLES

STARCHY VEGETABLES SUCH AS:

Quinoa (65g)	Pumpkin / squash (185g)
Corn on the cob (60g)	Carrot (160g)
Brown basmati rice (40g)	Swede (150g)
Wholewheat / egg pasta (40g)	Beans & lentils (150g)
White spaghetti / pasta (35g)	New potatoes (75g)
Parsnip (40g)	Sweet /baked potato (60g)
White rice (25g)	

STARTERS TO AVOID:

Bread
Pastry based starters
Paté

STARTERS TO CHOOSE:

Melon & Parma ham
Soups
Smoked salmon & salad

MAINS TO AVOID:

Stuffing
Too many roast potatoes
Too many parsnips
Sweet redcurrant jelly

MAINS TO CHOOSE:

Turkey
Chestnuts (good alternative to stuffing and great as a snack),
2 or 3 roasted new potatoes,
steamed veg (half your plate) and
cranberry sauce.

PUDDING TO AVOID:

Christmas pudding / cake
Sorbet
Cheese & crackers

PUDDING TO CHOOSE:

Vanilla ice cream
Cheese & Oatcakes (small portion)
Low GL puds from Cookbook
See low GL Christmas cake recipe

DRINKS TO AVOID:

Baileys, Beer, Sweet drinks
Tea and coffee (caffeinated drinks)
Sugary & Diet drinks

DRINKS TO CHOOSE:

Lots of water!
Champagne
Dry wine
Spirits and non-sugary mixers



CHRISTMAS Lunches

THE LOW GL WAY

TOP TIPS!

Serve roasted butternut squash and new potatoes instead of potatoes and parsnips.

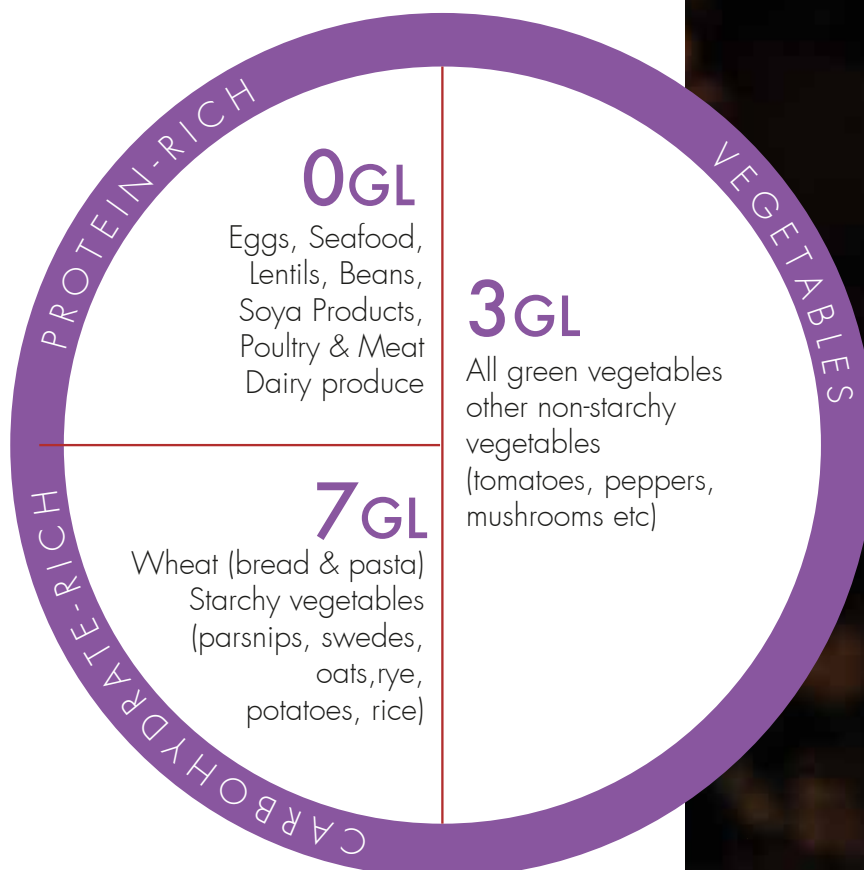
Make your own cranberry sauce using fresh cranberries, fresh orange juice and xylitol

If your meat is not organically farmed, discard the saturated fat from the juices by quick freezing the juices and spooning off the solidified fat.

You won't notice any difference in flavour, but you will feel more comfortable after the meal by not consuming so much fat!

Remembering the rule that 50% of your plate should be kept for non-starchy veg.

Roasted onions make a great accompaniment to your meal and are naturally low GL. Use a chestnut based stuffing.



Christmas Desserts



CHOCOLATE FRUIT & NUT CLUSTERS

5 GLS PER SERVING

- 100g dark chocolate (e.g. Green & Blacks or any other good quality chocolate)
- 15g dried cranberries
- 40g pecan nuts
- 5 Nairns rough oatcakes
- 2tsp xylitol
- 40g flaked almonds

1 Melt the chocolate in a glass bowl set in shallow water over a low heat

2 Blend all the ingredients except for the flaked almonds in a blender until roughly chopped

3 Add the mixture with the flaked almonds to the melted chocolate and coat through

4 Spoon into 10 – 12 cake cases for a 5 GL snack or 20 petit four cases for a 2.5 GL sack

5 Chill in the fridge until set

TOP TIP

These are delicious and a favourite with kids. Get them involved in making them too. Ideal as a sweet treat following your Christmas meal if you don't want a heavy pudding. Or serve with tea / coffee later.

Christmas Desserts



LOW GL CHRISTMAS CAKE

This cake was devised for those with blood sugar problems and digestive issues such as irritable bowel syndrome, but it is also great as a delicious, low GL substitute for the real thing, as long as you keep to a small/medium slice, Note that because it has a low sugar and alcohol content, it will not keep for more than a week but can be frozen.

- 170 pitted prunes
- 115g dried apple rings
- 115g dried apricots
- 50ml brandy or tea
- 1 small apple, washed and grated
- Zest and juice of 1 orange
- 1 tsp ground ginger
- 1/2 tsp ground cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp fresh grated nutmeg
- 1 dsp vanilla essence
- 170g soft butter
- 85g xylitol
- 4 medium eggs
- 85g ground almonds
- 85g rice bran (or wholemeal flour)
- 1 tsp gluten free baking powder

1. The day before you make the cake, chop the dried fruit into a bowl and pour over the brandy / tea. Leave overnight (stirring as you are passing / when you can).
2. Line a 20cm deep cake tin with a double layer of greaseproof paper. Set the oven to 150 C fan assisted or 160 C if not fan assisted/gas mark 2).
3. Cream the butter and xylitol, then stir in the chopped fruit, orange zest and grated apple. Add the vanilla and spices and beat the eggs in, one at a time. Don't worry if it looks a bit curdled, it will be fine!
4. Stir in the ground almonds, rice bran and baking powder thoroughly. Finally stir in the juice from half the orange to start with, adding more if necessary to make a soft consistency.
5. Pour into the cake tin and level the top. Tie a double thickness of baking paper around the outside with string.
6. Bake for 1 and a half hours – 2 hours until a skewer comes out clean. If the top is getting too dark, put a piece of foil over it. As soon as it is cool enough to touch, put a piece of foil tightly over the top and leave until completely cold - this softens the top of the cake.
7. Remove from the tin and wrap in a double thickness of foil.



CHRISTMAS Snacks

0 - 2 GL

- Almonds (small handful)
- Cashew nuts (small handful)
- Brazil nuts (small handful)
- Toasted seeds (small handful)
- Celery stick with a 'no added sugar' peanut butter
- Crudités with 1 tsp cream cheese
- Slice of ham with 2 tomatoes
- Half an avocado with oil and vinegar dressing and a few toasted pine nuts.
- Tuna, celery, cucumber and spring onion with oil and vinegar dressing
- 6 cubes of feta cheese with 6 olives and a handful of cherry tomatoes
- Half an avocado, chopped and mixed with toasted seeds
- Cup of instant miso soup & 1 rough oatcake
- Hard boiled egg & 2 sticks of celery

5 GL OR UNDER

- 30g chocolate covered nuts
- 1 small bar dark chocolate (25g)
- 1 apple / peach / pear / kiwi or orange with 1 tbsp nuts
- Houmous & crudités
- Plain bio yoghurt with berries and xylitol
- Half/small carton of soup
- 6 cubes of cheese with 6 grapes
- 1 punnet strawberries / raspberries / blueberries / blackberries with 8 almonds or macadamia nuts or 1 small plain yoghurt or small handful toasted pumpkin seeds.
- 1 small glass fruit juice, diluted half and half with water plus a few toasted seeds / nuts
- 2 oatcakes with a choice of any of the following: "no sugar" peanut butter / cashew butter/almond butter/ pumpkin seed butter/ houmous/smoked mackerel paté) / taramasalata/ smoked salmon & cream cheese/ cheese/ ham/ cream cheese & cucumber.

10 GL OR UNDER

- 2 oatcakes (berry or ginger) with 1 tbsp almond butter/ 1 heaped tbsp cream cheese.
- Cheese on thin slice of wholegrain / rye toast with mustard or Worcestershire sauce
- Small tub of cottage cheese with 1 ryvita or chopped apple
- 1 mini tub vanilla ice cream
- Half a filled wrap
- Regular fruit yoghurt
- Kids' Innocent berry smoothies with small plain yoghurt or 1tbsp tahini (pulped sesame seeds) or any nut butter.
- Baked apple with plain yoghurt & sunflower seeds

CHRISTMAS Recipes

SMOKED SALMON PATÉ - SERVES 2

5 GLs per serving

- 200g smoked salmon
- 200g cannellini beans, drained
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- a drizzle of olive oil or 1 tbs yoghurt to loosen the mixture if it is too thick
- 1 tbsp each of chopped fresh parsley and chopped fresh dill
- Freshly ground black pepper

Simply blend all the ingredients together in a food processor until the mixture is really smooth, then chill and serve with vegetable crudités and/or thin slices of toasted pitta bread or oatcakes.

SMOKED TROUT PATÉ - SERVES 2

2 GLs per serving

- 2 smoked trout fillets, skinned, boned and flaked
- 200g cream cheese
- Juice of 1/2 lemon
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 tsp horseradish (optional)

Blend all the ingredients together in a food processor or mash well with a fork. Serve with hot slices or triangles of wholemeal pitta bread and crudités such as carrots, celery, cucumber and peppers.

MINI SMOKED SALMON KEBABS

Less than 1 GL per kebab

Cut up smoked salmon slices into bitesize square pieces and thread onto a cocktail stick with 1 cherry tomato and 1 slice of cucumber.

CREAM CHEESE, GARLIC & HERB DIP

2 GLs per serving. Combine 200g cream cheese with 100g Greek yoghurt; 1 clove garlic and some mixed herbs. Blend with freshly ground black pepper and serve with sliced peppers.



EATING OUT at Christmas

The long season of Christmas parties may make it seem as if healthy eating is out of the window for the month of December! However, eating out can actually be easy if you know what to pick...

FILL YOURSELF UP WITH THE GOOD STUFF

Have a starter and a main course, or just a main course, but not a dessert. Avoid any bread, prawn crackers or similar. In fact it is best to ask the waiter to take these things away, thus removing the temptation. Instead, ask them to bring some olives. Try and stick to just one glass of good quality wine and remember to drink plenty of water.

WATCH OUT FOR HIDDEN SUGAR

When you are choosing items from the menu, watch out for the hidden sugar and high GL carbs in sauces, pickles and dips. For example, all Thai restaurants do very tasty fish cakes. These are better than things like spring rolls because they have more protein - but other types of fish cakes may have a high potato content so be careful. Also avoid sweet chilli sauces which accompany many Thai dishes.

REMEMBER, YOU CAN ORDER 'OFF MENU'

For instance, if you like the sound of the fish or chicken, but not the cream sauce, ask for it without, or swap it for another method of cooking. Don't be afraid of asking for exactly what you want.

ALWAYS ORDER VEGETABLE DISHES

Make sure you order plenty of vegetables and salad with your meal and, if you haven't had enough, order more!

AVOID FRIED FOOD

Choose food that hasn't been deep fried, so go for non-fried egg noodles or a small portion of plain or coconut rice. Wild rice is also a good option if available. Share portions between 2 or even 3 people.

JAPANESE RESTAURANTS ARE GREAT

All offer wonderful fish dishes, from Teriyaki salmon to Sashimi. Sushi isn't as good as it includes a lot of sweet white rice.

YOU ARE IN CHARGE OF WHAT GOES IN YOUR MOUTH - NOT THE WAITER OR YOUR COMPANIONS

By the time you get to the end of the main course you should feel satisfied. Most puddings need to be avoided as they will almost certainly be high in saturated fat and sugar. Fresh strawberries make an ideal end to any meal, but if they are not available, a small portion of vanilla ice cream is OK once in a while. If you'd like an after dinner drink, choose jasmine or peppermint tea, which is great for digestion.

TOP TIP

Encourage the family to get out in the fresh air with you for a morning walk - it's a great way to start the day and spend quality family time together too.

CHRISTMAS Holidays

SHORT HAUL FLIGHTS

Unless flying business/ first class, the normal 'meal' is now a sandwich/roll with tea, coffee, juice or alcohol. With no choice, the best thing you can do is take your own food or buy at the airport before you fly: Salad box with protein such as tuna/chicken or wholegrain roll/wrap with protein & salad filling, low GL bar (you'll find high protein bars at most international airports), Get Up & Go Protein shake, fruit, nuts, seeds and water.

LONG HAUL FLIGHTS

Probably impractical to take your own food, but many airlines have special dietary options e.g: gluten intolerant – see what your airline has to offer. Failing that, choose the chicken / fish option and just eat the healthiest parts of the meal. E.g. eat the chicken and veg and avoid the roll, cheese crackers and pudding. Have your own snacks with you (e.g. fresh fruit and seeds). In the air, bodily gases expand by a third.... So avoid foods that give you gas, such as lentils, beans, sprouts, cabbage etc. You should also try to avoid sugary and starchy foods.

Additionally, it is difficult to digest food in the cabin atmosphere, so take some digestive enzyme supplements (from a health food shop) and swallow with the first mouthful of food. Do drink plenty of water in between meals and avoid alcohol. You'll be amazed – a lot of people get really bloated from airline food. Eat wisely and you will feel much more comfortable. Carry herbal teas with you to naturally alleviate any digestive problems. Chamomile is good for indigestion, diarrhea, cramps, colic and flatulence; relieves stress and anxiety and can help sleep.

Ginger is excellent for the circulation; calms the digestion and is especially good for nausea, stomach upsets and constipation. Peppermint is helpful for nausea, diarrhea, indigestion and flatulence.



CHRISTMAS Holidays

MINIMISING EFFECTS OF JET LAG

Establish regular sleeping habits before your trip and get plenty of sleep before you leave. Its easier on your system to fly during the day if at all possible. Ideally: arrive in the early evening, go for a stroll and have a light dinner, then go to bed at 11.00 pm local time. Drink plenty of water on the flight and avoid alcohol which will greatly increase your fatigue. When you get to your destination, avoid napping (or have just an hour) and adjust sleeping and eating.

Get into the natural light. The sun signals to the body that you're in an active phase and will help you adjust to the different time. Exercise. When trying to stay awake, eat protein and vegetables and avoid starchy foods like pastas, breads, and rice.

OTHER WELLBEING TIPS

- Bring an extra cushion or travel pillow for neck and back support. One pillow provided in the plane is not sufficient. Wear eye shades and ear plugs to rest more peacefully.
- Stock up on good quality vitamins before you board. Fresh air is a foreign concept on flights, and in such confined quarters you may be susceptible to air-borne infections or diseases.
- If you suffer from motion sickness, chew on some raw ginger. Dispose of it before you go through customs of countries, which prohibit carrying vegetables and fruits.

REDUCE RISK OF DVT

- Take a junior aspirin half an hour before takeoff.
- Wear loose clothing and comfortable shoes.
- Avoid crossing your legs while seated.
- Follow the in-flight wellbeing exercise guidelines. For example, move your legs and rotate your ankles; get up and walk down the aisle at least once an hour. This is because working your muscles helps push blood back up your legs, improving circulation.
- Supportive flight socks can help – but should not replace moving regularly.
- Drink lots of water.

DVT (DEEP VEIN THROMBOSIS)

Prolonged inactivity slows circulation, for some people, allowing small clots to form in the legs and feet. DVT in the calf aches and gets worse over several days. There may be some warmth and swelling in the area around or the skin may redden or turn bluish. If you experience any of these symptoms, see a doctor.

