



THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians
5th Floor, Charles House, 148/9 Great Charles Street Queensway, Birmingham B3 3HT
Tel: 0121 200 8080 Fax: 0121 200 8081



Media Release

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For immediate release

Enjoy Christmas without the 6,000 calorie overindulgence

Surveys show that on average we will eat our way through as many as 6,000 calories on Christmas Day alone which, according to the British Dietetic Association, may be a result of overindulging on second helpings, snacks and alcohol.

Whilst we are likely to put on an average 5lbs (2kg) in weight over the Christmas period, the Christmas meal is not the main culprit. In fact, the traditional turkey roast can be very good for us.

Turkey is a low fat meat – most of the fat is stored in the skin, so remove the skin and you cut down on fat. Adding plenty of seasonal vegetables such as unbuttered Brussels spouts, peas and carrots will contribute towards your 5-a-day fruit and vegetable intake and help stop the urge to snack between meals. If you are watching your weight and want to make the meal healthier without missing out on the favourites, try the following tips: dry roast potatoes or use a spray of oil, make gravy with stock rather than the meat juices, accompany with a fruit based stuffing and bread sauce made with low fat milk.

Smoked salmon makes a good starter and is a source of omega-3 fatty acids, which helps keep your heart healthy; alternatively try a hearty vegetable soup or a refreshing melon starter. Christmas pudding is rich so a small portion should be satisfying enough, or you could go for fresh fruit salad or baked apples as a virtuous alternative.

It's usually all the little extras that pile on the calories and with all the tasty snacks around at Christmas, it's easy to over do it. For example, just a single mince pie contains about 250 calories! So, if you can, keep tempting treats out of sight and make sure you have healthy options to hand, such as:

- Fresh or dried fruit like dates, figs and apricots. Satsumas are handy, so keep a large bowl of these other fruits close by
- Chestnuts are lower in fat than most nuts so roast a few and leave the salted peanuts to one side
- Plain popcorn, pretzels, raw vegetables and low fat dips

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While a couple of glasses of red wine may be good for your heart, knowing your limits when it comes to alcohol will help you avoid that post-Christmas bulge. Why not alternate alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic and low calorie ones?

Sue Baic, spokesperson at the British Dietetics Association says: "At Christmas we're always surrounded by lots of lovely food and drink and whilst there is no reason to feel guilty about enjoying yourself, it's easy to over-eat. It's important to enjoy yourself over the festive period but taking some simple steps can contribute to a healthy and enjoyable festival period and may even stop you worrying about the post-Christmas crash diet.

"While many of the traditional foods are actually very low in fat, it's the trimmings and extra nibbles that can add the pounds. So go easy on these and take smaller portions of the roast potatoes, gravy, puddings and stilton. And finally, try to take some exercise over the festive period such as brisk walking or cycling."

The BDA's Glow Zone can be found at WB5 in Hall 18/19 at the NEC.

Ends

Notes to Editors

1. For further information or interviews, please contact Sanjay Mistry, PR Officer, on 07957 355 416.
2. The British Dietetic Association, founded in 1936, is the professional association for registered dietitians in Great Britain and Northern Ireland. It is the nation's largest organisation of food and nutrition professionals with nearly 6,000 members. About two-thirds of members are employed in the National Health Service. The remaining members work in education, industry, research, sport settings or freelance.
2. Registered dietitians hold the only legally-recognisable graduate qualification in nutrition and dietetics. They are experts in interpreting and translating the science of nutrition into practical ways of promoting nutritional well-being, disease treatment and the prevention of nutrition-related problems. Their advice is sound and based on current scientific evidence.
3. Registration, awarded by the Health Professionals Council, is an indication that a dietitian is fit to practise and is working within an agreed statement of conduct.
4. For further details about the British Dietetic Association, please visit our website: www.bda.uk.com.