



# THE BRITISH DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

*The Professional Association for Registered Dietitians*  
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# Media Release

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For immediate release

## **Stuff the turkey and not yourself this Christmas**

Christmas comes but once a year and maybe it's just as well as according to the British Dietetic Association we will eat our way through as many as 6,000 calories on Christmas Day alone (3 times the guideline daily amount of 2000 calories). Alarming studies have shown that 50% of the average annual increase in weight can be gained in the six week period from the middle of November and it's still there when Christmas comes around again next year.

To help the BDA has put together some tips to show how to eat, drink and be merry without having to face the New Year heavier and less healthy.

Don't make the festive season a six week eat-athon. Plan ahead – if going out to eat, have smaller meals beforehand and the next day and cut out any other treats. Move away from the buffet table, use a small plate (often put out for the sweet things) and no second helpings. Have a snack before leaving work like some wholegrain toast, a low fat yoghurt or a handful of dried fruit and nuts so you don't arrive at the party ravenous and stuff yourself on high fat snacks. Take fruit to work so that you can avoid the siren call of the open box of chocolates/plate of mince pies/sausage rolls. Write a list and stick to it in the supermarket and avoid those seasonal aisles full of temptation. If you buy what you need, you won't be faced with the temptation of leftovers. Plain popcorn, pretzels, raw vegetables and low fat dips are the way to go on snacks.

Watch your portions. Turkey is a low fat meat – most of the fat is stored in the skin, so remove the skin to cut down on fat and have a small portion. Add plenty of seasonal vegetables to take up at least one third of your plate such as lightly cooked, unbuttered Brussels spouts, peas and carrots - even the salad garnish in desperation. They contribute towards your 5-a-day fruit and vegetable intake and help stop the urge to snack between meals. If you want to make your Christmas meal healthier without missing out on the favourites, try dry roasting 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.

It's usually all the little extras that pile on the calories and with all the tasty extras around at Christmas, it's easy to over do it. For example, just a single mince pie contains about 250 calories and that's

**Website: <http://www.bda.uk.com>**

before the cream or brandy butter! If you can, keep tempting treats out of sight until after meal times and make sure you only open one thing at a time – don't have five boxes of chocolates on the go. Have healthy options to hand, such as fresh or dried fruit like dates, figs and apricots. Satsumas are handy and look beautiful piled up as do red apples, so keep a large bowl of these close by.

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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 and sore head. Why not alternate alcoholic drinks with non-alcoholic like fruit juice and sparkling water and stock up on low calorie mixers and soft drinks.

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 pleasurable time and may even stop you having to worry about the post-Christmas 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. It will boost your energy, burn up some calories and get you out of the house"

**Ends**

**Media enquiries to The British Dietetic Association should be directed to our media hotline on 0870 580 2517 or [pr@bda.uk.com](mailto:pr@bda.uk.com).**

#### **Notes to Editors**

1. 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](http://www.bda.uk.com).