

Eating Well in the festive season – and still enjoying yourself!

It's that time of year again; the supermarkets are full of chocolate, snack foods and sweets. It seems almost impossible to avoid the festive adverts both on the television and in the shops.

This can be a difficult time to navigate if you have been trying to make some lifestyle changes this year. Here are some top tips to help you to eat well this festive season, whilst still experiencing the joy of sharing food together:

1. Try not to go to a party feeling very hungry, as this can lead us to overeating and make it harder to make good decisions around food.
2. Try to stick to regular meals rather than snacking instead. Long gaps between meals may make it more likely that your portions increase in size, or you reach for snacks in between.
3. Always put some vegetables on your plate! This goes for all situations; buffets, parties, Christmas Day itself – vegetables are full of vitamins and minerals, and the fibre keeps us fuller for longer.
4. Rather than having a 'bit of everything' at a buffet, can you choose some of the healthier options and put these on your plate first? This means there will be less room for all the pastry covered foods!
5. Try to get out for a walk on Christmas Day. It is tempting to sit inside all day, but studies suggest a brisk walk outside will improve mood and sleep.
6. Have healthier snacks available (unsalted nuts, fruit, veggie sticks and dips) so there is always an option to have these. You could save the unhealthier snacks like chocolate, sweets and crisps for particular times such as the evening or when watching films.
7. If drinking alcohol – try to choose low calorie mixers or alternate with non-alcoholic drinks to keep yourself hydrated and avoid having too much sugar.
8. Stay well hydrated, this is good for us even if not drinking alcohol! Aim for 6-8 glasses of water per day.
9. Still try to achieve your 5 a day fruit and vegetables.
10. Enjoy yourself! It is only once a year, and there is no reason why you can't continue achieving your goals once the festive period is over.

If you are interested in making some lifestyle changes in the new year and are registered with an Ardwick & Longsight GP practice you could be eligible for the Real Food Real Health 8-week course. Apply here: [Meet your Dietitian! | Surrey Lodge Group Practice](#)