



body

## Christmas health tips

**T**he best gift you can give yourself this Christmas is the gift of good health. National not-for-profit organisation Jean Hailes for Women's Health has these simple tips to help you survive the silly season with your health intact:

### **What to eat**

Canapés or finger food at parties is often high in kilojoules and fat. Try to choose healthier options where possible, such as chicken skewers, sushi, prawns, smoked salmon, vegetable crudités and fresh fruit. Avoid fried foods, cakes and pastries.

### **What to drink**

If you choose to drink alcohol, be aware of how much you're consuming. Be wary of cocktails or punch as the alcoholic content may be higher than you realise.

### **When to eat**

Enjoy the festive fare in moderation and only indulge in the foods you really enjoy, not the ones that you eat 'just because they're there'. Waiting until Christmas Eve to eat a mince pie, or having a small piece of shortbread with your cup of tea, means you won't feel like you're missing out.

### **Avoiding alcohol**

This time of year there seems to be a party, dinner or get-together every night. If you want to limit your alcohol intake, try substituting a good mineral water for wine and drink it out of your favourite wine glass. If you do drink alcohol, alternate with non-alcohol drinks to keep yourself hydrated.

### **Weight gain prevention**

According to Nutrition Australia, Australians gain on average between 0.8kg to 1.5kg over the Christmas period. This weight can be difficult to shift. Try to prevent weight gain by enjoying festive food in moderation at celebrations and eating mostly healthy foods when at home.

### **Sleep**

When you're on holidays, try to go to bed and get up at a reasonable hour. Resist the long sleep-in or you may find it difficult to get to sleep the following night.

### **Physical activity**

Usual exercise classes or sports may be on hold over the holiday break, or perhaps it's too warm to exercise outside at your usual time. Beat the heat by exercising first thing in the morning, or in the evening.