



# HEALTHY HABITS OVER CHRISTMAS

This booklet contains information for people with diabetes but is suitable for all the family.





**Christmas is a time of great excitement.**

It is a time for family and for children, for lights, for decorations, Santa presents and of course for food.

**Rich delicious foods are a huge part of the traditional Irish Christmas.**

Piles of roast potatoes, the turkey and ham, the Christmas pudding soaked in brandy and a Christmas cake to top it off... So how do you get through the

festive season without completely over-indulging?

**Healthy eating for people with diabetes is the same as for everyone else.**

All of the traditional Christmas foods such as mince pies, Christmas pudding and Christmas cake can still be enjoyed but just don't eat too many or too much in one go. The trick is to spread them out over the Christmas period and keep your portions as small as you can.

# Top tips for a healthy Christmas

'Diabetic' sweets and chocolates are best avoided. They are expensive, don't taste as good as ordinary ones and if eaten in excess, can give you tummy ache or diarrhoea. It is better to have a small amount of ordinary chocolate occasionally.

Stick with sugar free or diet drinks as much as possible.

Keep fresh fruit juice to a small glass taken with a meal as it contains lots of natural sugars.

Save your selection boxes - they will last into January and don't need to be eaten all at once.

Love the Christmas fruit and veg! Fruit salad, melon, satsumas, fruit juice, parsnips, carrots, peas, brussel sprouts, broccoli and dried fruit (only a small handful)... Make sure you have your share of these too over Christmas not just crisps, chocolate and cake!

Take some exercise to walk off the large meals and puddings. Save the DVD's and computer games until it's dark and get outside when you can.

Take your time when eating; slow down especially at this time of year. You usually eat more when you eat quickly and slowing down will help you to reduce the amount you take in. A good tip to remember is to slow down more when you eat and try to speed up when you exercise!

Fried food can be easily avoided by roasting or grilling. Avoid adding butter to vegetables, and keep an eye on how many sauces you eat. When eating out ask for sauce on the side so you can control the amount you take in.

If you are on insulin or on a pump and will be snacking more or having a larger dinner discuss altering boluses or injections with your diabetes team.



# 10 festive breakfast ideas

Here are a few easy suggestions as to what foods you can eat for breakfast when you have Diabetes:

**1** Porridge with flaked almonds and strawberries and 1 teaspoon of cream

**2** Brown soda bread and 2 slices of lean bacon or salmon and slices of grilled tomato

**3** Yoghurt topped with fresh fruit compote and wholegrain cereal

**4** Poached or scrambled egg and smoked salmon with a small wholegrain bagel and fresh fruit juice

**5** Wholemeal pancakes topped with yoghurt and chopped fresh fruit

**6** Wholemeal pancakes drizzled with a small amount of honey and chopped fresh fruit

**7** 2 slices of wholegrain toast with jam (you only need a little) and freshly squeezed orange juice

**8** Scrambled eggs, grilled tomato and mushrooms with half a bagel

**9** Fresh fruit smoothie with 1 slice of rye bread and a small amount of chunky marmalade

**10** No added sugar muesli with natural yoghurt and a small glass of fresh orange juice



If you like sweetness, why not try **SPLENDA®** Low Calorie Sugar Alternative - you can sprinkle it on your fruit, use it in your tea or coffee or use it for baking.

# Dinner is served...

○ **For starters try melon and other fresh fruits with Parma ham** or smoked salmon or have avocado and prawns with a lightly dressed salad.

○ **A delicious homemade soup can be a warming low calorie starter.**  
Try adding some seasonal butternut squash and top with low fat crème fraiche and some fresh parsley rather than cream.

○ **Turkey meat is naturally low in fat,** however avoid the skin as this is high in fat.

○ **When roasting potatoes leave them whole** rather than cutting them small as the smaller they are the more fat they will absorb. Roast separately from the turkey to cut down on the animal fat.

○ **Fill up on plenty of vegetables** but avoid adding butter or rich sauces. Steam your vegetables rather than boil to hold onto those valuable vitamins and minerals.

○ **Gravy is a must for turkey** but allow the juices to settle so you can skim off all fat before making.

○ **Use low fat custard or crème fraiche** instead of cream or brandy butter with the pudding.

○ **Try fruit compote** by stewing your favourite berries with plums and apples with a pinch of cinnamon.

○ **Most importantly keep the 'goodies' to small portions and when you feel full stop eating!**

## Healthier Nibbles



**Satsumas** and other seasonal fruits such as mango



A small handful of **unsalted nuts** or if you can get them, chestnuts are the lowest fat nut

**Reduced fat crisps,** popcorn or pretzels

**Dried fruit** such as dates, figs or apricots

Bread sticks with tomato salsa or **low fat yoghurt dips**

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**The following pages contain some festive recipes to try out, but remember be sensible with portion sizes!**

# Butternut Squash Soup

## Ingredients

- 1 medium fresh chopped onion
- 1 medium celery stalk chopped
- 1 medium garlic clove minced/pressed
- 240mls of unsweetened apple juice
- 1lb/450g Butternut Squash peeled seeded and diced
- 1 medium potato, diced
- 800mls vegetable stock ( low salt preferably)
- 1 bay leaf
- 1 tsp ground thyme
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 6oz/180g fresh mushrooms sliced
- 3 tbsp sherry or white wine
- 1 tbsp soy sauce (preferably low salt)
- 1 pinch dried marjoram
- 150mls low fat milk
- 1 pinch salt and pepper (to taste)



## Method:

Combine the onions, celery, garlic, and apple juice in a large soup pot. Bring to the boil then reduce heat. Cover and simmer for about 10 minutes, until the vegetables soften.

Add the squash, potato, water or stock, bay leaf, thyme, salt, and nutmeg. Bring back to the boil, lower the heat, and simmer until the vegetables are very soft, about 20 to 25 minutes.

While the soup simmers, sauté the mushrooms in an uncovered skillet with the sherry, soy sauce, and marjoram until the mushrooms are tender and most of the liquid has evaporated, about 5 minutes. Set aside.

When the squash and potatoes are very soft, remove the soup pot from the heat and, working in batches, puree the soup with the milk in a blender or food processor. Reheat gently. Add salt and pepper. Serve topped with the sautéed mushrooms.

## Nutrition Facts

Makes 6 servings  
Per serving (9 floz)

Energy (kcal)	131.1 kcal
Total Carbohydrates	29.4 g
Sugars	10.4 g
Total Fat	0.4 g
Saturated Fat	0.1 g
Monounsaturated Fat	0.3 g
Protein	3.6 g
Sodium	447.9 mg
Fibre	3.8 g

# ❄️ Red Fruit Tiramisu



## Method:

Break up the sponge fingers and leave aside.

Whisk together the SPLENDA® Granulated Sweetener, egg yolks and mascarpone cheese.

Whisk the egg whites to form stiff peaks and gently fold into the mixture.

Arrange in the glasses a layer of broken up sponge fingers, then a layer of fruit, followed by a layer of the mascarpone cheese mixture.

Repeat the process and finish with a layer of fruit.

Cover each tiramisu with cling film.

Chill for 12 hours in the fridge.

Serve well chilled.

## Ingredients

- 12 sponge fingers
- 2 heaped tbsp Splenda® Granulated Sweetener
- 3 eggs, separated
- 250g mascarpone cheese
- 250g raspberries
- 250g strawberries, halved
- 6 wine or dessert glasses to serve

## Tip

You can make a coffee tiramisu if you exclude the red fruits and replace the sponge fingers with sponge cake moistened with coffee, and finally dust the dessert with cocoa.

## Nutrition Facts

Makes 6 servings  
Per serving (166g)

Energy (kcal)	287kcal
Total Carbohydrates	17.3g
Sugars	13.1g
Total Fat	21.3g
Saturated Fat	13.1g
Monounsaturated Fat	6.4g
Polyunsaturated Fat	1.2g
Protein	6.8g
Sodium	0.2g
Fibre	2.0g

# Christmas Cake

## Ingredients

360g/12oz tub of sunflower margarine  
9 medium size eggs  
450g/16oz plain flour sieved with 1 level tsp each of mixed spice, ginger and cinnamon  
375g/13oz sultanas, 350g/12oz raisins and 350g/12oz currants  
150g/5oz cherries, 100g/3oz mixed peel, 100g/3oz chopped dried apricots  
90 mls sherry medium dry  
Juice of 1 lemon and 2 oranges – grate fruit first and use the zest  
360g/12oz treacle (can be replaced with some golden syrup with little affect on nutritional content)  
15 ml sunflower oil

## Tip

If you wish to make a smaller cake use one third of the ingredients in a 7" square tin, this will give 18 servings. Two thirds of the ingredients will fit into a 10" square tin and will give 36 servings.



## Method:

Grease a 30cm (12in) cake tin with the sunflower oil, line the inside with baking parchment and the outside with brown paper.

Preheat the oven to Gas mark 2/150°C

In a large bowl beat together the treacle and margarine, gradually adding the eggs. Add half the flour.

Fold in the dried fruits, lemon and orange zest, sherry and fruit juices. Fold in gently.

Turn the mixture into the prepared tin and level the surface, making a slight dip in the centre. Place on a double light cardboard base.

Bake in the oven for approx 3/3.5 hours. Place a piece of greaseproof paper over the top if it becomes too brown.

Allow to cool for 15 minutes. When cool wrap in foil or greaseproof paper and store in an airtight container (with a raw apple).

To serve cut into finger slices i.e. 1.66cm by 1.66cms by depth of cake

## Nutrition Facts

55 servings per cake (finger slices i.e. 1.66cm by 1.66cms by depth of cake)

Energy (kcal)	189 kcal
Total Carbohydrates	29.5 g
Total Fat	6.9 g
Fibre	0.8 g
Alcohol	0.2 g



# Mince Pies with Sweet Pastry



## Method:

### For the Mincemeat

Mix all ingredients, cover and marinate in a cool place for 12 hours to allow flavours to develop.

Preheat oven to lowest setting. Transfer to ovenproof dish, mix in 4 tbsp water, cover with foil and cook for 3 hours. Check consistency, adding more water if too dry.

Cool, then pack into sterilised jars, cover with a waxed disc, seal and refrigerate.

### For the Mince Pies

Preheat oven to 200°/190° Fan/Gas Mark 6. Sift flour into bowl, add the Spread and rub in until mixture resembles bread crumbs. Stir in SPLENDA® Granulated. Add egg yolk with 2-3

tbsp cold water and mix to form a dough.

Roll out pastry to 1/2 cm thickness. Cut 7cm diameter fluted circles for bases and 6cm for lids, re-rolling pastry when necessary.

Carefully place pastry bases in patty tin and fill with dessertspoon of mincemeat. Press on the pie lid, sealing the edges and prick to allow the steam to escape. Bake for 12-15 minutes until golden.

Cool in tin for 5 minutes before carefully transferring to wire rack. Serve warm or cold. Can be stored in an airtight container for 2-3 days in the fridge.

## Ingredients

### Mincemeat (makes 56 Pies)

225g/8oz raisins, 225g/8oz sultanas, 225g/8oz currants

150g/5oz candied peel, chopped, 25g/1oz chopped almonds

25g/1oz stemmed ginger, diced

200g/7oz cooking apples, peeled, cored and diced

8 tbsp SPLENDA® Granulated

2 tsp mixed spice, 1 tsp nutmeg

1 orange, finely grated zest and juice, 1 lemon finely grated zest and juice

150g/5oz reduced fat shredded vegetable suet

### Pastry (makes 12 Pies)

300g/10oz plain flour

150/5oz Polyunsaturated Fat Spread, (59% fat) chilled and diced

2 tbsp SPLENDA® Granulated

1 egg yolk lightly beaten

180g/6oz mincemeat

## Nutrition Facts

Per serving (58g)

**Energy (kcal)** 202kcal

**Total Carbohydrates** 26.8g

**Sugars** 7.2g

**Total Fat** 10.0g

**Saturated Fat** 2.3g

**Monounsaturated Fat** 3.0g

**Polyunsaturated Fat** 4.0g

**Protein** 2.9g

**Sodium** 0.2g

**Fibre** 1.3g

# ❄️ Exercise, Exercise, Exercise!

We are all going to indulge a little over the holidays. Whether you have type 1 or type 2 diabetes, exercise helps keep your blood sugar under control.

Do consult your doctor before beginning an exercise program. Also, make sure that you have an understanding of how exercise affects your blood sugar, especially if you use tablets or insulin.

Check what's on in your area on Christmas day. If there is a local sponsored swim maybe take a walk there to offer support or why not even take part yourself!

Find out if there are organised walks or other activities taking place on St Stephens Day, a bit of exercise will make you feel like you've earned the turkey sandwich or turkey curry!

Despite the risk of low blood sugar, exercise is a valuable tool in managing your blood sugar. If you manage diabetes without medication or insulin, a brisk walk before or after a meal will help reduce your blood sugar levels.

Even if you manage your diabetes with medication, exercise can help reduce your blood sugar, and helps with losing any weight gained over Christmas.





## Christmas Cheer

We do more drinking at Christmas than at any other time of the year and alcohol is a big problem if you are trying to keep your weight stable.

Not only does it contain calories (one pint of beer has around 200 calories) it can also lead to low blood sugars, which makes you feel hungrier.

Never drink on an empty stomach and always have a snack at bedtime after alcohol as it can lower the blood sugar levels the next morning. If you are drinking make sure people around you know you have diabetes and always carry or wear some form of identification.

Choose sugar free mixers and avoid alcopops. Have a glass of water or

diet drink for every second drink, this will not only reduce the calories, but will also help the hangover.

Making a wine spritzer by mixing wine with diet lemonade or soda water is another way to cut back on calories.

If you have a lot of parties to go to try not to drink at all of them - and bringing the car with you has the added benefit of not having to queue for taxis.

**Enjoy Christmas and New Year,** it is a time for celebration and eating for everyone... a little of what you fancy over Christmas will definitely do you good and an odd high glucose reading shouldn't affect your long term control or health just so long as it's an odd one.





**Happy Christmas  
to you and yours**  
from the  
**Diabetes Federation of Ireland**



**We thank you for your  
continued support now  
and throughout  
the New Year.**

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