

TOP 10 XMAS TIPS!

There's no reason to undo all of the hard work you've put in during the year, just because it's Christmas!

Follow these TOP 10 XMAS TIPS to help keep YOU looking good this festive season and be fit 'n fabulous, ready for the new year.

1. Shop wisely

Plan your Christmas menu, as well as some of the food you'll be eating that week. Include healthy snacks like fresh fruit, raw nuts, seeds and yoghurt.

2. Cook light

The best cooking methods are steaming, poaching, baking, roasting, grilling and stir-frying. Avoid saturated fat in recipes, saute meat and vegetables in a non-stick pan with a light spray of oil, then add a little stock or water during cooking to stop sticking and retain moisture.

3. Avoid the 'party fat' trap

If you are entertaining, make a healthy selection of party food. Oven-bake your spring rolls instead of frying them in oil. Make a simple hummus or blend a tin of tuna or salmon with low-fat ricotta, lemon juice and black pepper. Natural yoghurt works well when mixed with fresh garden herbs. Use vegetable crudites (carrot, celery, capsicum) instead of bread and crackers.

4. Drink plenty of water

Remember to keep your water intake high if you're partying. Alternating alcohol with water will keep you hydrated so you can have a good night without feeling lousy the next day.

5. Always eat a healthy breakfast

Don't skip your first meal of the day on Christmas Day just because you know you'll be eating a big lunch or dinner. Aim to eat a balanced healthy breakfast and you'll have better control of your food intake during the rest of the day.

6. Eating out

Most Christmas meals out involve buffets, so there are plenty of options. Choose fresh seafood without the mayonnaise, lean roast turkey and meats (simply remove the visible fat before eating), leafy green salads, steamed vegetables and fresh fruit for dessert. If you just can't resist that pudding and brandy sauce, have a small portion or share it with someone.

7. Eat the right way

Consume food slowly, savour and enjoy your meals and be reasonable with your portion sizes. Try to fill up your plate with lots of fresh salads and steamed vegetables instead of stuffing, gravy and meat.

8. Recipe makeover

It's always possible to make a healthier version of your favourite recipes. Mash your spuds with skim milk instead of butter or cream. Roast vegies in a tablespoon of olive oil or steam them instead. And substitute a good vegetable or nut oil for the butter in Christmas cakes and puddings.

9. Be active

Make exercise part of your Christmas Day and make it fun for everybody. Kids have a short attention span, so keep it varied. Backyard cricket, soccer and basketball are a great way to burn off lunch.

10. Rest and relax

Christmas holidays tend to be a bit manic, so the trick is to learn to relax. Make sure you get enough sleep and rest, which is essential for your body to repair and recharge.

Make it happen.

Dion Mychalyn

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