



Enjoying Christmas with diabetes

Enjoying your food over Christmas, while managing diabetes, can be tricky. The following tips will help you think through ways to enjoy your food and manage your blood glucose levels too.

Change in your routine

While you may not be in your normal work or home-life routine, try to continue to have regular meal times. This helps to avoid long gaps, eating very large meals and grazing on extra snacks between meals. Try to keep up your usual routine with physical activity too.

Party food and nibbles

- Choose low carb dips (nut butters, salsa, satay sauce, guacamole, hummus, cream cheese or sour cream mixed with herbs or spices).
- Choose low carbohydrate party foods (see recipes below), mixed nuts, olives and veggie sticks (e.g. carrot, cucumber and celery) served with a low-carbohydrate dip instead of crisps and breadsticks.
- Serve vegetable/meat/fish/chicken skewers with satay sauce or chicken wings (not BBQ or honey-glazed) with sour cream. Limit any pastry-based, breaded or battered finger foods (e.g. chicken tenders/nuggets, spring rolls, samosas).
- Be careful to avoid foods that are unsafe during pregnancy e.g. smoked salmon (unless cooked), unpasteurised cheese e.g. camembert, brie and blue-veined cheese and pate.

Drinks

- You should avoid alcohol, non-alcoholic drinks (most contain carbohydrate), fruit juice and ordinary soft drinks.
- Choose diet soft drinks, slim line tonic or sparkling water with a little mint, lime or sugar free cordial.

Eating out and dinner on Christmas Day

- Choose a vegetable or protein-based starter e.g. prawn cocktail, salad or vegetable soup without bread.
- Enjoy your main course. Many of the foods in your Christmas dinner will not affect your blood glucose at all. These include turkey, ham, most vegetable dishes.
- Choose a small portion of boiled or roast potatoes with your dinner. Go for gravy with your meal but skip the high sugar cranberry sauce
- Watch out for “extra” carbohydrate sources with your main meal e.g. stuffing, Yorkshire pudding, croquette potato, garlic bread, chips.

Traditional Christmas Dinner	Alternative Christmas Dinner
Roast Turkey with gravy 2 tablespoons carrots 4-5 sprouts 3 small pieces of roast potatoes 2 scoops mashed potatoes 1 tablespoons stuffing 1 tablespoon cranberry sauce	Roast Turkey with gravy 2 tablespoons carrots 4-5 sprouts Herby green beans (see recipe) 3 small pieces of roast potatoes 1 scoop mashed potato or 1 spoon stuffing
Total carbs =90g (6 carb choices)	Total carbs =45g (3 carb choices)

For dessert, choose a lower carbohydrate option (see recipes) or choose a savoury option such as a cheese-board (with suitable cheeses). Adapt recipes by using sugar free angel delight with cream or make ‘trifle’ with no added sugar jelly with berries, layer of custard and cream. Space out your dinner and dessert or if having dessert directly after dinner it may help to choose one less carb choice at your main meal.

Recipes

Spicy Kale Crisps

Ingredients

225g curly kale
1 tbsp. olive oil
1 tsp garlic powder
1 tsp cayenne pepper
Pinch of salt

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 150°C/Gas Mark 2.
2. Wash the kale and pat dry with kitchen paper (dry thoroughly).
3. Remove the leaves from the stems and place the leaves on a large baking tray.
4. Drizzle with the olive oil and spices and massage until the leaves are completely coated.
5. Bake in the oven for 15-20 minutes until the kale leaves are crisp.
6. Serve straight away!

Spicy Roasted Chickpeas - *A great alternative to crisps or peanuts and a good source of fibre*

Ingredients

2 tsp rapeseed oil
½ tsp ground cumin
½ chilli powder
Pinch salt

Method

Drain and rinse the chickpeas and pat dry on kitchen paper

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C/Gas 5. Oil a large baking tray with 1 tsp rapeseed oil and place the tray in the oven for 3 mins
2. Spread the chickpeas onto the hot baking tray and cook for 15mins, mixing a couple of times to make sure they cook evenly
3. Remove from the oven, place the chickpeas in a bowl and drizzle with the remaining oil. Mix well. Add the cumin, chilli powder and salt. Mix again and tip back into the baking tray
4. Roast for another 10-15mins until brown and crunchy
5. Serve warm or enjoy cold

Creamy pesto with crudités – serves 8

Ingredients

300g tub cream cheese (pasteurised)
2 tbsp. basil pesto
1 tbsp. pine nuts (optional)
A drizzle of olive oil
Sticks of carrots, celery, peppers and cucumber

Method

1. Mix the cream cheese with the pesto. Scatter with the pine nuts and a drizzle of olive oil.
2. Serve the vegetable sticks alongside the pesto dip.

Roasted Cauliflower with Tomato, Dill and Capers – Serves 6

Ingredients

2 tbsp. capers, drained and roughly chopped	1/3 cup olive oil, plus more for the cauliflower
1 tbsp. wholegrain mustard	1 medium cauliflower, divided into florets
1 garlic clove, pressed	1 tbsp. chopped dill
2 tbsp. apple cider vinegar	4 oz. baby spinach leaves
salt and freshly ground black pepper	1 cup cherry tomatoes, cut in half

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 210°C.
2. To make the dressing, place the capers, mustard, garlic, and vinegar in a medium sized jar.
3. Add a big pinch of salt and a few grinds of pepper.
4. Give the jar a vigorous shake, add olive oil and shake the mixture again. Taste and adjust if needed.
5. Place cauliflower florets on a baking sheet, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper.
6. Roast in the middle of the oven until cooked through and deep brown in spots, turning once, about 25 minutes in total.
7. Place the spinach, tomatoes, and dill in a large bowl.
8. Once the cauliflower is done, and while it is still hot, add it to the bowl as well. Drizzle in about half the dressing and toss to coat. This dish can be served warm or room temperature.

Chicken Bravas - Cubes of moist, spicy chicken coated with a rich tomato, garlic, chilli and smoked paprika

Ingredients (makes 30 pieces)

2 tsp rapeseed oil	1 tbsp. tomato puree
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts	2 heaped tsp smoked paprika
6 cloves garlic, slices	1 chilli pepper, finely chopped
1 x 400g tin of chopped tomatoes	10 little gem lettuce leaves

Method

1. Add oil to a large pan.
2. Add the chicken and cook for 4-5 minutes, stirring occasionally, until lightly brown all over.
3. Add the garlic and cook for 2 minutes then add the tomatoes, puree, paprika and chilli. Bring to a gentle boil and then turn down the heat, add a lid and simmer for 10mins, stirring regularly. Remove the lid, stir well and gently simmer until the chicken is well cooked, almost all of the liquid has evaporated and is thoroughly coating the chicken.
4. Arrange the lettuce around the side of a serving dish, pile the chicken cubes into the middle with cocktail sticks to skewer the chicken cubes.

Herby Green beans – Serves 8

Ingredients

900g green beans trimmed	Pinch of salt
1 tbsp. olive oil based spread or butter	2 tsp black pepper
2 tbsp. basil, finely chopped	4 tbsp. parmesan cheese shavings
8 tbsp. fresh parsley, finely chopped	

Method

1. Boil the green beans for 8-10mins until tender. Drain and set aside.
2. Melt the butter in a pan. Add the basil, parsley and season to taste. Mix with the green beans.
3. Arrange on a serving plate, garnish with parmesan cheese and serve immediately.

Chocolate mousse - Makes 4 servings

Ingredients

Flesh of 2 ripe avocados (240g)	1/8 tsp salt
Cocoa powder (40g)	2-6 Tbsp. sweetener of choice
1/4 - 1/2 cup milk/milk alternative of your choice	Pinch of cinnamon and nutmeg (if desired)
1 tsp pure vanilla extract	Fresh raspberries and whipped cream, to serve.

Method

1. Add all ingredients into a food processor and blend until creamy and smooth.
2. Divide between 4 small serving bowls.
3. Top with a spoon of fresh cream and raspberries and chill until ready to serve.

Mixed Berry Cobbler - Makes 6 servings (12g carbs or 1 carbohydrate choice per serving)

Ingredients

2 tblsp. oats, milled in food processor until fine	1-2 level tbsp. sweetener e.g. Splenda, Stevia
1 tblsp. dark brown sugar	1 tblsp. cornstarch
1 tblsp. cold unsalted butter	1 tsp. fresh lemon juice
1 package (12 ounces) frozen mixed berries	

Method

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C.
2. Place six 4-ounce ramekins or custard cups in a baking pan.
3. Whisk the flour and brown sugar in a small bowl. Cut the butter into small pieces, add to the bowl, and rub with your fingers until the mixture is crumbly.
4. Combine the berries, granulated sweetener, cornstarch, and lemon juice in a bowl. Toss to mix. Spoon a half cup of the berry mixture into each ramekin. Sprinkle each with a half tablespoon of the crumbly dough. Bake until the topping is golden and the berries are bubbly, about 30 minutes.

Chocolate Dipped Strawberries – Makes 1 serving (15g carbs or 1 carbohydrate choice per serving)

Ingredients

5 medium-sized strawberries
15 grams milk or dark chocolate

Method

1. Wash strawberries and pat dry.
2. Melt chocolate in a bowl in the microwave or small pan over low heat, stirring frequently.
3. Dip each strawberry in the chocolate and then allow to cool before eating.

“Cheesecake” Biscuits – (10g carbs or 1 carbohydrate choice per serving)

Ingredients

1 Rich tea biscuits
1 teaspoon light cream cheese spread (e.g. Philadelphia light)
1 teaspoon 100% all-fruit or no added sugar strawberry jam (e.g. St. Dalfour, Follain)

Method

1. Spread the biscuits with the cream cheese.
2. Top with the jam and sprinkling of cinnamon if desired.