

Mind & Body

Lose weight without losing out

eat better

Piled on the pounds over Christmas? You're not alone. On average we gain 1-5lb (1-2.5kg) by the time New Year's Day rolls up, according to the British Dietetic Association. So if you're trying to shed some of that festive weight, here's an answer: cut the calories.

The good news is that you won't need to live on lettuce leaves or deprive yourself of appealing winter warmers such as soups and porridge. As our sample daily menu (based on foods available in store at Waitrose) shows 1,500 calories can be delicious – and sustaining.

Just make sure that every meal includes a serving of healthy carbohydrates such as oats, brown rice and other whole grains, protein from foods such as lean meat, fish, eggs and pulses, plus the healthy fats found in nut and seed oils and oily fish like salmon.

Add in a rainbow of fruit and vegetables – try seasonal green winter produce such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, leeks and kale, plus fruits such as blueberries, apples and satsumas, along with dairy foods such as low-fat milk, yogurt and

Know the rules...

According to government publication The Eatwell Guide, to maintain body weight you need to limit the amount of energy obtained from foods and drinks to 2,000 calories a day for the average woman and 2,500 for the average man.

To achieve a healthy, sustainable weight loss we need to reduce the number of calories consumed by 500 a day, depending on your sex – so that's 1,500 calories for a woman and 2,000 for a man.

Emma Williams,
Waitrose nutritionist

cheese, and you're good to go. And don't forget to keep well hydrated with around six to eight glasses of water a day.

For NHS free calorie checker, visit nhs.uk. Check pack labels and/or waitrose.com for calories/nutrients of in-store foods

WHAT A DAILY 1,500

Breakfast
Porridge (211kcal)
40g porridge, 70g yogurt and 50g blueberries.
NUTRITION Carbs 30.8g; fat 5.4g; fibre 4.8g; protein 8.7g

Morning snack
Almonds & coffee (163.5kcal)
A handful (25g) of nuts, 1 cup of tea/coffee with 30ml semi-skimmed milk
NUTRITION Carbs 3.8g; fat 13g; fibre 3.1g; protein 6.3g

Afternoon snack
Thin flatbread with cottage cheese & tea (97.5kcal)
60g cottage cheese, 1 flatbread thin (garnish with parsley, or mustard and cress, or peashoots if you like), 1 cup of tea/coffee with 30ml semi-skimmed milk
NUTRITION Carbs 9.1g; fat 2.7g; fibre 0g; protein 8.6g

On the right track

The latest activity trackers can do so much more than count steps. Now you can even make payments from your sports watch!

If you haven't invested in an activity tracker yet, you're missing out. According to the latest data from Compare Cover, almost 27% of Britons now own a wearable fitness device – and we can quite understand why.

Boasting the ability to monitor everything from step count and running speed to sleep patterns, these beautiful little pieces

of kit are great tools for those wanting to stay on top of their health and fitness goals.

But they're no longer just for checking your activity levels – some of the latest devices can even double up as your credit card when used at contactless payment points.

Here's our pick of activity wearables from John Lewis (johnlewis.com)...

move more



BEST FOR TECHIES

Fitbit Ionic, from £239.99
This device syncs with your phone messages and music library, plus Strava, WhatsApp and Facebook. It also doubles as a credit card for contactless payments.



BEST FOR SWIMMERS

Samsung Gear Sport, £299
Stay on top of your health goals with this device's calorie tracker and training apps. It's also water resistant up to 50 metres, making it great for swimming sessions.



BEST FOR RUNNERS

Garmin Vivofit 3, £58.99
The third generation of this basic band has the same sleek design and ability to track steps, calories and distance. It can also tell when you switch from walking to running.

Helping you make healthier choices

If you're finding it hard to know what's good for you, look out for our Good Health label. It's a sign that you're not only making delicious choices, but nutritious ones too



CALORIE DIET LOOKS LIKE



Supper

Scottish salmon fillet (686kcal)

1 salmon fillet, ½ pack Waitrose Spelt, Quinoa, Red Rice & Wild Rice; 100g green beans; 1 small apple
NUTRITION Carbs 53.1g; fat 31g; fibre 14.8g; protein 44.2g

Lunch

Soup (325kcal)

½ pack of Waitrose Green Vegetable and Lentil Soup Mix; 1 slice wholemeal bread; 1 small satsuma
NUTRITION Carbs 35.9g; fat 10.9g; fibre 8.7g; protein 15.2g

Photography: Rob White, Karen Scott

24 HOURS ON MY PLATE



Leonie Elliott

The actress says that she usually eats quite healthily, but owns up to a liking for crisps

'Waking up at 8am, I had a glass of water followed by breakfast - granola made with oats, flaxseeds, almonds and coconut milk, plus a cup of green tea. Then I headed for London's Oxford Street for a day's shopping. I ate an apple and a banana on the way.'

'Lunch was a chicken and pesto sandwich on brown with plain crisps and a bottle of still water. Mid-afternoon I snacked on a green juice smoothie and a small pack of mixed nuts.'

'Back home I cooked supper for me and my partner - salmon baked West Indian style with Caribbean seasoning, loads of veg - spinach, kale, broccoli, carrots - white rice and a glass of coconut water. Before bed I had a cup of soursop [a fruit thought to have health benefits] with lemongrass tea.'

'My favourite foods are noodles, pancakes and, dare I say it, crisps. Chocolate I can ignore, but a packet of crisps I can't resist - any brand, any flavour! I believe in healthy eating, but you have to have treats. Mine is usually a bowl of chips.'

Leonie Elliott plays Nurse Lucille Anderson in series 7 of *Call The Midwife* on BBC One. Starts Sunday, 21 January, 8pm

Give your memory a boost

The reliability of our memories may be a cause for concern as we get older, but there is much we can do to keep our brains alert and focused.

US studies reveal aerobic exercise is beneficial, stimulating brain cell growth, which improves cognitive function.

We sleep better too. Seven to nine hours will prime our brains to release the optimum amount of the

hormone cortisol, so we can perform at our best throughout the day.

'As we sleep, our brain processes past events, moving them to our memory banks,' says Geraldine Joaquim, clinical hypnotherapist at Quest Hypnotherapy (quest-hypnotherapy.co.uk). 'Not enough sleep raises stress hormones levels, which can lead to memory loss.'

A little stress can be a good thing, but prolonged anxiety affects our decision-making.

'Research shows meditation and mindfulness help with mental focus,' says Dr Sam Kankanamge, osteopath and Sen Wellness Clinic founder (senwellnessclinic.co.uk).

But the key to enhancing the brain's flexibility, explains

Dr Hannah Critchlow, who is a neuropsychologist at the University of Cambridge, is to challenge it and constantly continue to learn.

Let's also consider what we eat. A good, balanced Mediterranean-style diet, high in healthy fats - olive oil, fish and nuts, plus fruit and veg - works to protect our memory.

And according to neuropsychologist Dr Catherine Loveday at the University of Westminster, musical memories may be stored in a 'safe' area of the brain.

'Music attaches itself to our life story,' she says. 'A familiar piece can evoke an underlying sense of past experiences.'

So why not create your own music memory time capsule of songs that are guaranteed to trigger remind you of past events?

feel great

The verdict

Emma Williams, Waitrose nutritionist, says

Flaxseeds provide heart-healthy omega 3 and oats also help lower cholesterol, but coconut milk is high in saturated fat, so watch your intake. Fruit and nuts are perfect snacks to help hit your fibre needs. Green leafy veg provide folate and vitamin C - important for energy and reducing tiredness. You met your fluid requirements and exceeded your 5 a day. For less fat, opt for baked crisps.

4/5

