

December healthy eating game plan

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Get on the nice list this holiday season with these tips from Kira Sutherland

Limit alcohol but have fun.

Alternate between alcohol and water. Or enjoy an alcohol look-a-like such as soda with fresh lime. “Before you head out, decide how much you’re going to drink. Be aware of volume and how often your glass is being topped up,” says Sutherland. If you don’t want to drink, agree to be the driver.

Stock up on healthy food.

Sutherland keeps a tray of veggie treats in her fridge. “It’s already there for me in a snack-size option rather than going to the cupboard and getting a biscuit. If you don’t want to eat it, don’t put it in your house.”

Control your portions.

“Take smaller portions to begin with. Don’t go back for seconds,” Sutherland says. “If it’s finger food, be aware of how much you’re having. Have the treat but not all of it.”

Choose the ‘healthy’ option.

“There are things you can choose to do to eat healthier at every party.” Steer away from the chips and cream-based dip in favour of hummus and sushi.

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Prioritise sleep.

“Really focus on getting yourself to bed earlier,” says Sutherland. “We can stay up later; it’s about making that effort to get 7.5 to eight hours of sleep. Have naps on the weekend to make up for it.”

Exercise alternate days.

“If people say, ‘I’m going to exercise four to five days a week’, and then they only exercise three days, they kind of give up. Whereas, if you have the commitment to exercise every ‘other’ day, it makes it a lot easier to stay in the pattern.” Exercising with others can also help motivate.

Detox sensibly.

Don’t use your planned detox as an excuse to indulge in extremes. “The point of a detox isn’t deprivation,” says Sutherland. “Rather than a punishing regime, enjoy a range of healthy foods and think long-term lifestyle change over a week of lemon juice.”

Practise moderation.

There’s a place for fun. “In Australia it’s a whole month of craziness. It’s about picking which party you go hard at. Then there’s the choice not to go over the top.”

Nurture yourself in kinder ways.

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