

Special occasions, holidays and eating out

Restaurants

- **Look at menus in advance** – Most are online and many have lower calorie options available.
- **Decide in advance** – this will reduce impulse-ordering
- **Don't be afraid to ask** – restaurants are used to making changes and substitutes. If what you want isn't exactly on the menu, don't be afraid to ask for it.
Examples of this include: Veg without butter, salads with dressing on sides, substitute high-fat sides
- Having a two or three course menu?
 - Try soup or salad starter and fresh fruit, sorbets, or even a coffee for dessert
 - Share a starter or a dessert instead of having the whole one.

Buffets

- **Take a deep breath.** Before you choose anything, take a step back and look carefully at what is on offer.
 - Choose a few items you really enjoy rather than trying a bit of everything
 - Fill the rest of your plate with low calorie options such as salad or vegetables
- **Smaller plate.** Try using a smaller side plate rather than a dinner plate.
- **Visit the buffet only once**, then get rid of your plate as soon as you have finished
- If you really want a second visit, drink a large glass of water, and wait 20 minutes. After that, you may find that you are full anyway.

Social eating

- If the host/hostess is a close friend, it may be a good idea to ring in advance and tell them that you are watching what you are eating.
- **Offer to take a dish** with you to ensure that there is a healthy option for you to have.
- Offer to **help serve up** so you can control portion size.
- Fill your plate with salad and vegetables.

Alcohol

- Does a holiday/special occasion really mean you have to drink more than usual?
- Treat alcohol as any other food: **Plan in Advance** what you are going to have and stick to it!
- Alcohol has extra calories and can weaken your resolve with regards to eating. It can also make you feel less inclined to exercise.
- Why not remove temptation by offering to be the driver?

Pressures to eat

- If you feel under social pressure to eat more than planned, **try to work out why?**
- Are you afraid of offending the host? If so, practice ways to politely refuse food without causing offence
- Encountering comments such as 'You have done so well, you deserve a treat?' Try a simple 'No, thank you' and change the topic of conversation.
- Look around during social occasions – not everyone is eating or drinking excessively.
- Do you think that they are being judged for their behaviour?
- **TAKE CHARGE, PREPARE AND PLAN!** People will soon get used to the fact that you are in control of your food intake and will stop pressuring you!