

## GI News—December 2011



- Eating fish regularly linked to lower risk of diabetes and heart disease
- Low GI diet, with or without a change in weight, is good for overall health
- Holiday cooking with low GI Carisma potatoes
- Is a day or two of festive overeating harmless?
- How to lower the GI of your baking
- Submit a low GI left-overs recipe to OzHarvest for their cookbook

It's laden table, festive fare time, so this issue we have 7 low GI recipes from colleagues from around the world to share. Our take-home message however, is to remember that food provides more than nourishment and pleasure, it can also 'build bridges to friendship'. We were reminded of this reading a wonderful new cookbook, *Monday Morning Cooking Club*, whose authors have raised \$230,000 for charity including OzHarvest (see Food for Thought). It's not a diet book or health book. It's a book about the real food that real people love to prepare and serve their loved ones and many of the recipes are low GI (the chicken and barley soup is perfect for a wet and wintry night). May you enjoy cooking and sharing good food (low GI of course!) and good times with your family and friends in the month ahead and years to come.

Good eating, good health and good reading.

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### Food for Thought

#### **Ten million meals**

*“My name is Ken and I am a rough sleeper. I have been living on the streets of Sydney for the past 10 years and I am 62 years old. The years have been very hard on both mind and body, but one thing has made the past five years bearable and that is OzHarvest. They don't only feed people like me with fresh and nutritious food but they supply drop-in centres right across Sydney. We, the homeless, are forever grateful for the caring people of OzHarvest. We love and thank you OzHarvest.”*

OzHarvest ([www.ozharvest.org](http://www.ozharvest.org)) is a non-denominational charity that collects and delivers perishable excess food from food wholesalers, retailers, function centres, caterers, supermarkets, corporate offices, restaurants, and cafes and delivers it to charities feeding people in need on the same day. They don't store or warehouse food. Currently they deliver 333,000 meals a month Australia wide with a fleet of 16 vans. By distributing food to those in need, they turn excess food into a resource and save thousands of kilograms of food from being dumped as landfill each year.

It all began when founding director Ronni Kahn decided that she was not prepared to be part of the waste cycle that is a natural outcome of the hospitality industry. Being part of this

industry for over 20 years, she saw a lot of food thrown away. Researching options for dealing with excess perishable food, she found there was no organisation in Sydney that could collect the food on a regular and professional basis, so she set up a food rescue charity herself. Backed by The Macquarie Group Foundation which provided funds and Goodman International which provided a van and office space, OzHarvest was established and collected its first meal in November 2004.

**Share your favourite low GI recipe making the most of left-overs** OzHarvest is now celebrating collecting and delivering ten million meals to disadvantaged Australians by creating cookbook called *Ten Million Meals* which will weave together personal stories and recipes using left-overs. It will feature recipes from Jamie Oliver, Neil Perry, Matt Moran, Maggie Beer, Kylie Kwong and Bill Granger along with recipes from the rest of us who feed our families every day. How about sending in your favourite low GI one? They'd want to know a little about your recipe too. Is it a family favourite? Has it been passed down through generations? Or is it something you recently whipped up with left-overs in the fridge? The closing date for submission is 19 December 2011. Check out the guidelines at [www.ozharvest.org/getinvolved.asp?pageID=1389](http://www.ozharvest.org/getinvolved.asp?pageID=1389) and let your recipe be part of a program where food builds bridges to friendship.

## **News Briefs**

### **Low GI diet, with or without a change in weight, is good for overall health**

A randomised controlled trial from the Diogenes study published in *Circulation* (<http://circ.ahajournals.org/content/early/2011/11/15/CIRCULATIONAHA.111.033274>) indicates that eating a low GI diet, with or without a change in weight, is good for your overall health and will help prevent the diseases that are linked to inflammation (obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer, arthritis). It's a rather technical report, so we asked Prof Jennie Brand-Miller to explain the results for *GI News* readers. 'Inflammation is the result of oxidative stress in the cells,' she says. 'Having too much glucose makes the cells see 'red'. It is well known, that weight loss will reduce inflammation and risk of developing such diseases, now we know that a low GI diet alone (with or without weight loss) will reduce inflammation and risk of inflammatory diseases.'

### **Regularly eating fish linked to lower diabetes and cardiovascular risk**

People who regularly eat fish as their primary source of animal protein have lower blood glucose concentrations and a reduced risk of developing type 2 diabetes are the findings of a study published in *Nutrición Hospitalaria* ([http://scielo.isciii.es/scielo.php?script=sci\\_abstract&pid=S0212-16112011000500017&lng=en&nrm=iso&tlng=en](http://scielo.isciii.es/scielo.php?script=sci_abstract&pid=S0212-16112011000500017&lng=en&nrm=iso&tlng=en)), whereas consuming red meat, especially cured meats is related to increased weight gain and obesity. Mercedes Sotos Prieto, lead author of the study which forms part of the Prevention with a Mediterranean Diet study explains how 'in Mediterranean countries, consumption of foods that typically form part of the diet here has decreased in recent decades. The consumption of saturated fats mainly from red meats and industrial baking has increased and this is really worrying.' The researcher points out that 'the red meat consumption of the sample population reaches an average of once a day, which is high in comparison to dietary recommendations.' Conducted in the Valencian Community on 945 people (340 men and 605 women) between 55 and 80 years of age, the aim of the study was to understand dietary patterns in terms of meat and fish consumption and the correlation between the Mediterranean diet and its association with CVD risk factors.

‘Various hypotheses have been put forward that attempt to explain why the consumption of fish can be related to diabetes,’ they explain. ‘The increase of omega-3 in the cells of the skeletal muscles improves insulin sensitivity.’

### **AMD-like lesions delayed in mice fed lower GI diet**

Feeding older mice a lower GI diet delays the onset of age-related, sight-threatening retinal lesions, according to a new study from the Laboratory for Nutrition and Vision Research at Tufts University. We usually prefer to stick to clinical trials and epidemiological studies in humans in *GI News*, but this research in *Aging Cell* (<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1474-9726.2011.00752.x/abstract>) appears to establish the first mature, mammalian model indicating a delay in the development of AMD-like lesions as the result of a lower GI diet. Prof Allen Taylor says: ‘The only difference between the two groups of mice we studied is the GI of their meals, which suggests that diet alone is enough to accelerate or delay the formation of lesions. These results, coupled with similar observations made by our laboratory in earlier human epidemiologic studies imply that lower GI diets hold potential as an early intervention for preventing onset and progress of AMD.’

The researchers studied middle-aged and older mice that consumed either a higher or lower GI diet. Mice fed the lower GI diet developed fewer and less-severe age-related lesions in the retina than the mice fed the higher GI diet. Compared to the mice on the lower GI diet, mice on the higher GI diet demonstrated elevated accumulations of debris known as advanced glycation end products (AGEs) in the whole retina, particularly in the cells of the RPE (retinal pigment epithelium). The RPE plays a crucial role in maintaining vision and its dysfunction results in the gradual central vision loss that is the hallmark of AMD. AGE accumulation has also been linked to tissue damage in other age-related diseases such as Type 2 diabetes and cardiovascular disease.

### **Holiday cooking with Carisma**

Australia’s versatile low GI spud is back in Coles supermarkets (sorry not yet Tasmania) ready for all your holiday cooking for family and friends through December and January. Here at *GI News* we are tossing up between Roasted Potato Salad with Capers and Turmeric Roasted Potatoes both from the *Monday Morning Cooking Club* cookbook.

Sadly, there are always naysayers even about spuds! ‘Potato farmer Dave’ posted a comment on Catherine Saxelby’s website review of Carisma potatoes claiming that ‘Carisma is not a potato variety but simply a clever but simple marketing trick of the potato company that sells them to Coles’. Sorry Dave, you are so wrong. Carisma is an Australian first. It is a distinct variety of potato owned by Agrico (a Dutch seed production company) and all the development (several years of it) was done here in Australia by the Mitolo Group with constant GI testing carried out by SUGiRS. If you want to know more about this low GI spud, check out Catherine’s independent Foodwatch Review and see her answer to potato farmer Dave at <http://foodwatch.com.au/blog/product-review-carisma-cutting-the-gi-of-potatoes.html#ixzz1eQ4eboIY>. Tasmania – you’ll have Carisma spuds in your Coles supermarkets early in 2012.

### **Salt reduction – where’s the jury on this?**

Back in August (<http://ginews.blogspot.com/2011/08/gi-symbol-news-with-dr-alan-barclay.html>) we reported on a recent *Cochrane Review* that said ‘cutting down on the amount of salt has no clear benefits in terms of likelihood of dying or experiencing cardiovascular disease (CVD).’ The researchers made this finding partly because there just haven’t been large enough trials run for long enough periods of time to prove that sodium reduction really does reduce the risk of heart attack and strokes (CVD).

Now the latest *Cochrane Review* ([www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22071811](http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/22071811)) (on salt) concludes that ‘we do not know if low salt diets improve or worsen health outcomes’. Here’s their plain language summary based on 167 studies between 1950 and 2011 that they reviewed: ‘Low salt diets reduced systolic blood pressure by 1% in white people with normal blood pressure and by 3.5% in white people with elevated blood pressure. The effect was similar in trials of 4 weeks or longer. There were increases in some hormones and lipids which could be harmful if persistent over time. However, the studies were not designed to measure long-term health effects. Therefore we do not know if low salt diets improve or worsen health outcomes. Most of the people who took part in the studies were whites, but in the small number of non-whites the blood pressure reduction was, if anything, greater. More research on reduced salt intake is required, particularly in non-white populations.’

**Where does this leave us?** First of all, salt reduction is not the only way of lowering blood pressure and reduce your risk of heart disease.

- Losing 10 kg of excess body weight will reduce blood pressure by 5–20 mmHg
- Consuming a diet rich in fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products with a reduced saturated and total fat content (i.e., the DASH diet) will lower blood pressure by 8–14 mmHg
- 30 minutes a day of regular physical activity (a brisk walk will do) will lower it by 4–9 mmHg

**Our take-home message:** To keep out of the emergency room, being active and enjoying an overall healthy low GI diet that’s moderate in sodium (460 - 2,300 mg a day) and lower in calories and saturated fat is good for your overall health as the latest Diogenes study (see above) has found and will help prevent obesity, diabetes, heart disease, cancer and arthritis (diseases linked to inflammation).

### **[Get the Scoop with Emma Stirling](#)**

#### **The scoop on staying on the health track over the holidays**

As we enter the home stretch to the holidays, tis the season to be jolly and cocktail parties, neighbourhood gatherings, work functions and backyard BBQs crowd our calendars, just as leftovers crowd our fridge and pantry. So, how can you stay on the health track with all this abundance? And what’s the smart approach to leftovers and food gifts? Here's the scoop.

**Be a host, with the most** When you plan your party aim for quality not quantity. Indulging your guests with seafood may be more expensive than a bowl of chips or crackers and high fat dip, but if it’s a special occasion the investment in your health goals is worth it. If you plan a right size portion of each course for each guest, you can stay on budget and not have leftovers to tempt you. Pass on the big plates. Your favourite salads look stunning served in a

drinking glass with a dessert fork at party time, just as I did for my recipe for Hot smoked salmon and freekeh nicoise ([www.scoopnutrition.com/2011/11/recipe-redux-hot-smoked-salmon-freekeh-nicoise](http://www.scoopnutrition.com/2011/11/recipe-redux-hot-smoked-salmon-freekeh-nicoise)).

**Bring a (healthy) plate** A common holiday eating trap is the family and neighbourhood get-together. Everyone is so willing to bring a dessert, dip or dish that there is often way too much (rich and creamy) food on offer, not to mention a fridge groaning with leftovers. So tell your host that you will bring your signature Moroccan chickpea salad or our Low GI, Carisma potato salad with lemon yogurt dressing (<http://ginews.blogspot.com/2011/05/in-gi-news-kitchen.html>). You can then skip the creamy coleslaw and creamy pasta salad and fill half your plate with veggies (even if you brought them yourself!)

**Let it go** Pass on the cute-shaped shortbreads and mince pies and make your own gifts like preserved lemons, herb vinegars, lovely fruit baskets with a sprinkling of exotic nuts or grow-your-own pots of culinary herbs.

**Stay safe** Christmas is a high risk time for food poisoning, especially in places where summer heat can affect perishable, party food quickly. You need to take special care preparing food for young children, pregnant women, the elderly and anyone whose immune system may be compromised. Follow the golden rules of food safety: use separate cutting boards and utensils for raw meats and defrost meat and poultry in the fridge or butchers cool room; transfer perishable food in an esky or icebox; keep food in the fridge until the last minute or pull out small serves throughout the party; refrigerate leftovers as quickly as possible and use within 2-3 days, discarding any items that have been on the kitchen bench or buffet too long. Get creative with your leftover ham or turkey, like in our recipe for Turkey and bean chili with avocado salsa (<http://ginews.blogspot.com/2007/05/low-gi-recipes-of-month.html>) or [Cajun stuffed peppers](#), and you'll sail into the New Year in great shape.

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## [In the GI News Kitchen](#)

American dietitian and author of *Good Carbs, Bad Carbs*, **Johanna Burani**, shares favourite recipes with a low or moderate GI from her Italian kitchen. For more information, check out Johanna's website at [www.eatgoodcarbs.com](http://www.eatgoodcarbs.com). The photographs are by Sergio Burani. His food, travel and wine photography website is [www.photosbysergio.com](http://www.photosbysergio.com).

### **Cheese-filled leek cannelloni**

This is my friend Vanda's recipe. She was served this unusual 'primo piatto' at a restaurant in the mountains well above her village in northern Italy. She replicated it perfectly (she says) at home and has shared it with me. And now I'm sharing it with you. Buon appetito! Serves 4 (2 pieces each).

4 long cleaned leeks, white parts only  
120g/4oz gorgonzola dolce (sweet), at room temperature  
120g/4oz part-skim ricotta  
1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil

1 tbsp Italian seasoned breadcrumbs  
2 tbsp grated parmigiano reggiano cheese

**Cut** the leeks in half so you have 8 pieces, each approximately 10cm/4in long. Steam for approximately 25 minutes or until the leeks are very soft but still holding their shape. Remove from heat and allow to cool. Carefully cut through the outer layers and gently open. Do not cut through all the layers. Depending on how thick each leek is, separate the layers and lay them on a flat surface, overlapping 3–4 layers on each other.

**Prepare** the filling by mixing together the cheeses in a small bowl, using a fork to smooth. Divide the filling among the prepared leek layers and gently roll to close.

**Place** the cannelloni, cut side down, in a shallow, oven-proof casserole dish, previously sprayed with vegetable oil. Drizzle the olive oil over the top of the leeks, then sprinkle the breadcrumbs and the grated cheese. Grill/broil 10cm/4in from the grill for 5–6 minutes or until the leeks are golden brown. Serve immediately.

*Per serve*

Energy: 880kJ/210cal; Protein 11g; Fat 15g (includes 8g saturated fat and 33mg cholesterol); Available carbohydrate 3g; Fibre 1g

Cut back on the food bills and enjoy fresh-tasting, easily prepared, seasonal, satisfying and delicious low or moderate GI meals that don't compromise on quality and flavour one little bit with this **Money Saving Meals** recipe from Ian Hemphill's *Just Add Spice* (with Lyndey Milan and published by Penguin/Lantern). For more recipes check out the Money Saving Meal website at [www.moneysavingmeals.com.au](http://www.moneysavingmeals.com.au).

### **Baharat beef with olives**

Spice up your holiday fare with this casserole made with inexpensive, slow-cooking cuts such as chuck or gravy beef). The book includes the recipe to make your own spice mix – but we prefer to use Herbies ready-made blend. Baharat, sometimes referred to as Lebanese seven spice, has a beautiful bouquet that conveys all the romantic fragrances of everything that is spice. We used low GI Carisma potatoes, but if they aren't available, you can reduce the GI by mashing low GI root vegies like parsnip, carrot and butternut pumpkin with the potato. Serves 4–6.

1 tbsp olive oil  
3–4 cloves garlic, chopped  
1kg (2lb 4oz) lean beef, cubed  
5 tsp baharat spice mix  
400g (14oz) can whole peeled tomatoes  
½ cup (125ml) dry red wine  
12 pitted black olives  
Salt  
Mashed Carisma potatoes (4), to serve

**Preheat** the oven to 120°C/250°F (100°C/210°F fan-forced).

**Heat** the oil in a medium, heavy-based flameproof casserole dish over medium–low heat and soften the garlic. Do not brown.

**Toss** the cubes of meat in the baharat spice mix. Increase the heat to medium, add the beef to the casserole dish and cook briefly until sealed on all sides. Add the tomatoes wine, olives and ½ cup (125ml) water. Season to taste with salt if desired, but keep in mind that the olives



are salty so you may not need much. Stir frequently and bring to a gentle simmer, then cover and cook in the oven for 2½–3 hours until the beef is very tender. Serve over a scoop of well-mashed potatoes with a salad on the side.

**Just Add Spice** (and baharat spice mix) is available from Herbies [www.herbies.com.au/featured-books/107-just-add-spice](http://www.herbies.com.au/featured-books/107-just-add-spice).

*Per serve (for 6 serves without the mashed potato)*

Energy: 1700kJ/400cals; Protein 38g; Fat 11g (includes 4g saturated fat and 100mg cholesterol); Available carbohydrate 28g; Fibre 3.5g

### **Honey baked salmon**

The salmon is smothered in an aromatic mixture of honey, fresh garlic and ginger, soy sauce, coarse grain mustard, and balsamic vinegar in this fabulously simple and delicious recipe from Azmina Govindji, nutrition consultant for the Ismaili Nutrition Centre ([www.theismaili.org/nutrition](http://www.theismaili.org/nutrition)). Azmina recommends serving it on a bed of brown rice with a crisp green salad, and for that really special occasion, partnering it up with asparagus tips. Serves 2.

- 1 heaped tsp honey
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsp light soy sauce
- 1–2 tsp coarse grain mustard
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 2cm/¾in chunks fresh ginger, chopped
- 2 tbsp finely chopped fresh coriander leaves
- 1 tsp chopped fresh green chillies (optional)
- 2 salmon fillets, each about 120g/4oz

**Mix** together all of the ingredients except the salmon. Marinate the salmon fillets in this mixture and set them aside for half an hour (if you have time).

**Place** the fillets with the marinade on a lightly greased baking tray and cook in an oven preheated to 200°C (400°F) or gas mark 6 for 10–12 minutes until just cooked.

**Azmina Govindji** is a Registered Dietitian and TV Nutritionist (as seen on *The One Show*, *The Wright Stuff* and *This Morning*). she is Media Spokesperson for British Dietetic Association and NHS Choices. Find her at [twitter.com/AzminaNutrition](https://twitter.com/AzminaNutrition)

*Per serve (without the brown rice and salad)*

Energy: 880kJ/232cals; Protein 25g; Fat 13g (includes 2g saturated fat and 33mg cholesterol); Available carbohydrate 3.5g; Fibre negligible

### **Blood orange compote**

This light, not too sweet, slightly acidic and low GI dessert makes the perfect finishing note to a big meal. The *Monday Morning Cooking Club* team agreed to share it with *GI News* readers for this special holiday fare edition. The recipe was contributed by Barbara Solomon who has been making it for years for her family and friends having adapted it way back from one she found in Janet Fletcher's *Fresh from the Farmers' Market*. Serves 6–8.

6–8 large blood or navel oranges (or a mixture of both)  
¾ cup LogiCane or table sugar  
1 cup dry white wine  
1 cinnamon stick  
2–3 cloves  
2 thin (5mm) slices peeled fresh ginger, lightly smashed  
1 cup water

**Remove** 4 wide strips of peel from 1 orange, making sure there is no pith, and reserve. Cut a thin slice off the top and bottom of each orange. Using a small paring knife, slice off the peel and pith. Cut between the membranes to remove the segments and place in a serving bowl. Alternatively, cut the peeled oranges into 5mm (1/8in) thick slices.

**Combine**, in a saucepan, the remaining ingredients plus the reserved strips of orange peel. Bring to the boil and simmer on medium heat, stirring to dissolve the sugar, for 10–15 minutes, or until the liquid is reduced to 1 ½ cups (375ml). Strain the hot syrup and pour over the fruit, adding the cinnamon stick to the fruit. Leave to cool. Cover and refrigerate for several hours or overnight. Serve chilled.

The **Monday Morning Cooking Club** started back in 2006 when 6 Jewish women who live in Sydney came together on a Monday morning to share recipes and talk about food. What started as an idea to raise money for charity (over \$230,000 to date), grew into a project to document their community's somewhat obsessive relationship with food, and became a beautifully photographed (by Alan Benson) book with 100 recipes from 65 'contributing cooks'. It's available from their website at [www.mondaymorningcookingclub.com.au](http://www.mondaymorningcookingclub.com.au).

*Per serve (based on 8 servings using 8 oranges)*

Energy: 750kJ/180cals; Protein 2g; Fat 0.5g (includes 0.1g saturated fat and 0mg cholesterol); Available carbohydrate 35g; Fibre 4g

### **Baked fruit medley**

This deliciously simple baked fruit medley from Catherine Saxelby and Jennene Plummer's *Zest* cookbook (Hardie Grant) makes a fabulous finish to festive fare. When stone fruit is in season, Jennene suggests you ring the changes and top a selection of peaches, nectarines, apricots or plums with flaked almonds and bake for 15–20 minutes. Serves 4–6

¼ cup pure maple syrup  
30g/1oz light margarine  
1 tbsp brown sugar  
1 tsp ground cinnamon  
3 green apples, quartered (retain skin and core)  
3 pears, quartered (retain skin and core)  
200g/7oz dried figs or the softer dessert figs  
3 stalks rhubarb, trimmed and sliced  
low-fat ice cream to serve

**Preheat** the oven to 180°C (350°F).

**Combine** the maple syrup, margarine, sugar and cinnamon in a small saucepan. Heat gently, stirring, until melted and well combined.

**Arrange** the apples, pears and figs in a baking dish. Pour in the syrup and toss gently so the



fruit is evenly coated. Bake for 15 minutes. Add the rhubarb to the dish, stirring in gently so it is coated with syrup. Bake for a further 10–15 minutes until the fruit is tender. Serve warm with a scoop of low-fat ice cream.

*Zest* is available from Catherine's website, Foodwatch at <http://foodwatch.com.au/books/zest-cookbook.html>.

*Per serve (including 1 scoop low fat ice cream)*

Energy: 1325kJ/315cal; Protein 3g; Fat 5g (includes 1g saturated fat); Available carbohydrate 63g; Fibre 10g

## **Busting Food Myths with Nicole Senior**

**Myth: Festive overeating is harmless.**

**Fact:** Festive overeating can have adverse health consequences. It's time to outsmart our primitive instincts and engage higher order thinking about how much we eat during the holidays.

The holiday season is rapidly approaching and chief cooks in households around the world are starting to think about what festive fare to serve family and friends (of course the better organised ones have already made the Christmas puddings, mince pies and cakes). Serving the special foods that are part of your cultural traditions is part of the ritual and something everyone looks forward to. In my family, *ensalada rusa* (Spanish potato salad) will always be on the buffet table along with other traditional Spanish and Aussie Christmas fare. It's all so tempting, it's hard not to overfill your plate ...

However, is it really harmful? Well, professor of nutrition and psychiatry at Tufts University Susan Roberts reports Americans gain an average of between five and eight pounds in the short interval between Thanksgiving and the New Year (just one month). I'd bet most of that stays put after the Christmas tree is packed away.

The big problem these days with our festive fare is the the holiday season seems to have spread way beyond that special Christmas eve dinner or Christmas lunch with parties and celebrations galore, each vying for your eating affections. However each time you overload your system with excessive food, it's akin to metabolic assault: your blood becomes milky with fat (post-prandial lipaemia); glucose, insulin levels and inflammatory hormones rise; your blood vessels become less flexible (called endothelial dysfunction) and your blood becomes more likely to clot (or pro-thrombotic). Unfortunately for those with diabetes or pre-diabetes, these adverse effects are worse.

And did you know that rather than signalling the body to ease-off at subsequent meals, huge meals actually increase appetite for the next meal perpetuating a vicious cycle of overeating (people often say their stomach has stretched). Eating high GI foods makes things worse. It's no wonder emergency rooms experience a rush of cardiac patients on Christmas and Boxing Day.

Surely it's time to move on? The planet can no longer sustain such excess and our physical health is suffering as a result. Here are some tips to help you resist the pull of festive overeating and holiday weight gain:

## WHAT to eat

- Utilise the hunger-busting power of protein (lean meat, poultry, seafood and eggs) and low GI carbs (dense grainy breads, pasta, milk and yoghurt) as well as the low-kilojoule filling-power of vegetables and legumes.
- Focus on eating modest portions of food you really like and avoid the rest
- Curb the liquid calories from sugary drinks and alcohol which don't satisfy hunger but contribute to weight gain
- Avoid or limit the calorific 'nibbles' served before or between meals
- Limit how much alcohol you drink or you will lose those higher order thinking skills to put all of this into action

## HOW to eat

- Decide you will retain control beforehand and eat mindfully
- Avoid turning up to festive feasts starving – this increases the chances of overeating
- Resist the temptation to go for seconds
- Enjoy small portions of rich foods like puddings and desserts – try sharing a single serving
- If you are catering, be bold in offering healthier options and cook the right quantities to avoid waste. Don't pressure guests to eat more than they need.
- If you're on the receiving end of pressure to overeat, be kind but assertive. Your health and comfort need not suffer to please others.

Many of the adverse effects of overeating can be reversed by exercise, but it's hard to throw a ball around when you've fallen into a postprandial stupor and can't get out of your chair. Perhaps the best test of eating the right amount is having some get-up-and-go a few hours after getting up from the table? Sincere best wishes to you and yours for a happy and healthy festive season.

**Further reading:** Why do people eat too much?

([www.wired.com/wiredscience/2011/11/why-do-people-eat-too-much](http://www.wired.com/wiredscience/2011/11/why-do-people-eat-too-much)) by Jonah Lehrer

Nicole Senior (<http://nicolesenior.com.au>) is an Accredited Practising Dietitian and Nutritionist and author of *Eat to Beat Cholesterol*, *Heart Food* and *Belly Busting for Blokes*.

## [GI Symbol News with Dr Alan Barclay](#)

### Celebrating the low GI way

You don't have to forsake all of your favourite foods to avoid the battle of the bulge. Watching the amount of food you eat and swapping rich and fatty high GI foods for healthy low GI alternatives will help keep you on an even keel over the festive season. Here are some practical tips for the big day:

Main course	Serve size
Roast turkey breast with Stuffing (made with a Burgen or a grainy low GI bread or traditional oats), <b>or</b>	1 large slice 1 scoop
Baked ham, <b>or</b>	1 large slice

Honey and oregano roasted leg of lamb	1 large slice
Your favourite fish or seafood (avoid deep fried or battered varieties)	1 piece fish or 4 king prawns
<b>Starchy sides</b> (a generous 'scoop' is about ½ cup)	
Vegetable roasties (see recipe below), <b>or</b>	1 generous scoop
Blu Gourmet pearl couscous salad with vegetables and cashew nuts and sesame dressing ( <a href="http://ginews.blogspot.com/2009/10/gi-symbol-news-with-alan-barclay.html">http://ginews.blogspot.com/2009/10/gi-symbol-news-with-alan-barclay.html</a> ), <b>or</b>	1 generous scoop
Baked, boiled or steamed Carisma potatoes, <b>or</b>	1–2 potatoes
Potato (made with Carisma potatoes), rice, pasta or couscous salad with vinaigrette dressing, <b>or</b>	1 generous scoop
Bean, lentil or corn salad with vinaigrette dressing	1 generous scoop
<b>Plus non-starchy veggies</b> (as much as you like, but hold the creamy dressings and sauces)	
Mixed garden salad	As much as you like
Green vegetables	As much as you like
<b>Dessert</b>	
Pavlova with light whipped cream, sliced strawberries, bananas, grapes, kiwifruit and passion fruit, <b>or</b>	1 small piece
Trifle with sponge finger biscuits, diet jelly, low fat yogurt with strawberries and blueberries on top and 99% fat free fromage frais, <b>or</b>	1 small serve
Vanilla pannacotta with strawberry salsa	1 small serve

### **Honey and oregano roasted leg of lamb with vegetable roasties**

(Recipe by Anneka Manning from *The Low GI Family Cookbook* published by Hachette in Australia and Da Capo in the US/Canada) Serves 6 (with plenty of leftovers)

1 kg leg of lamb, trimmed of all visible fat  
 2 large garlic cloves, sliced  
 8 sprigs oregano, each halved  
 2 tbsp pure floral honey  
 4 tsp Dijon mustard  
 2 tsp lemon juice

#### *To serve*

1 quantity Vegetable roasties (see recipe)  
 steamed, boiled or microwaved green beans

Preheat oven to 200°C (400°F/Gas 6). Place a rack in a roasting pan and add 1 cup water to the pan. Use a small sharp knife to cut slits all over the surface of the lamb. Poke the garlic slices and sprigs of oregano into the slits. Place the lamb on the rack in the roasting pan and roast for 30 minutes. Combine the honey, mustard and lemon juice. Brush over the lamb and return to the oven for a further 20 minutes for medium or 30 minutes for well-done. Remove lamb from oven, cover loosely with foil and set aside in a warm place for 15 minutes to rest. Carve the lamb and serve accompanied by the Vegetable Roasties and steamed green beans.

### **Vegetable roasties**

3 Carisma low GI potatoes

1 medium orange-fleshed sweet potato (about 500g/1lb 2oz)

2 medium parsnips (about 400g/10oz)

2 medium carrots (about 250g/8oz)

1/2 medium butternut pumpkin (about 700g/)

3 teaspoons olive oil

Pinch salt (optional)

Freshly ground black pepper

4 sprigs rosemary, thyme or oregano, leaves removed from stems

Preheat the oven to 220°C (440°F) and line a roasting pan with non-stick baking paper. Peel all the vegetables, deseed the pumpkin and cut the vegetables into 2.5cm chunks. Place them in the prepared roasting pan, drizzle with the olive oil and a tiny sprinkle of salt (if using), pepper and herbs. Use your hands (clean of course) to toss the vegetables to coat with the oil and seasonings. Bake for 1 hour, or until golden and tender, tossing the vegetables about 3 times during cooking so that they brown and crisp evenly. Serve immediately.

#### *Per serve*

Energy: 2110kJ; Protein 44g; Fat 13g (includes 5g saturated fat and 110mg cholesterol); carbohydrate 45g; Fibre 9g; sodium 200 mg

### **The GI Symbol, making healthy low GI choices easy choices**



#### **For more information about the GI Symbol Program**

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## GI Update

### **Prof Jennie Brand-Miller answers your questions**

*I'm an avid cook, and I love December's festive fare from the shaped special biscuits to Christmas cake and pudding and mince pies. Which flours, if any, are low GI?*

To date there are no GI values for any raw flours of any kind – whether milled from wheat, soy, rice or other grains. This is because the GI rating of a food must be determined physiologically (in real people). So far we haven't had volunteers willing to consume 50-gram portions of raw flour! What we do know, however, is that many bakery products such as scones, cakes, pikelets and crumpets made from fine flours, whether white or wholemeal, are quickly digested and absorbed. However, some products also made with fine flours, such as biscuits, are often low GI. Here at SUGiRS, we have even tested a low GI Christmas cake and low GI rum balls! So, the final GI of products made with flour is unpredictable.

With your own baking, what I suggest is that you try to increase the soluble fibre content by partially replacing flour with oat bran, psyllium or rolled oats. Of course for Christmas cake and pudding, you can also help lower the overall GI by adding lots of dried fruit. And if you like in Australia, make sure you use LogiCane, the low GI sugar. And keep those portions moderate as it's really the calories that are the problem with these treat foods!