

## Indulge the smart way this festive season

By Belinda Wan  
bwan@sph.com.sg

Christmas is just around the corner, which can only mean two things: Parties and great food.

You don't need to worry about piling on the pounds, not if you are adopting the right dietary practices.

Ms Jaclyn Reutens, a dietitian at Aptima Nutrition & Sports Consultants said there are common mistakes people often make during the festive season.

She said: "They skip meals, especially breakfast, to make room for a big lunch or eat only one meal a day, usually dinner, which is the festive meal. This causes them to overeat and consume way too many calories."

It is often not what you eat, but how much you eat that counts, said Ms Reutens.

She said: "You can eat your favourite foods once a year. Your portion size is critical. You can enjoy one to two dinner spoons of each favourite dish. That way, you get to savour enough of the dish without feeling guilty. Learn to appreciate that good things can come in small bites."

She provided six ways in which one can avoid overindulging at a party.

1. Avoid foods that are drenched in mayonnaise.
2. Try to go for colourful canapés, as they often contain vegetables.
3. Try to avoid foods with a pastry around it as it would contain a lot of

butter and flour, for example, mini quiches, vol-a-vents and mini croissants.

4. Drink water or sparkling water. Always hold a drink in your hand. If your hands are free, you tend to pick up foods faster.
5. Pace yourself. Don't eat bite-sized snacks one after another. Wait at least five to 10 minutes between each. Talk more during that interval.
6. Scrutinise the snacks. If a snack does not look like it is worth the calories, skip it. For instance, a slice of chocolate cake may seem appetising from a distance but close up, it may look dry.



Photo: Thinkstock