

Watching the Waist

Hasmita Nair speaks to dietician Jade Campbell for tips on how to ensure your body will bounce back quickly if it's suffered from festive season excess

THERE is something about the festive season that makes us think our usual disciplines can be shelved. We find ourselves eating and drinking more than usual, with the only workouts done being trips to and from the kitchen.

Unfortunately, the body doesn't suddenly speed up its metabolism to accommodate all the extra treats, and come January many of us find ourselves a couple of kilograms heavier.

Eating out:

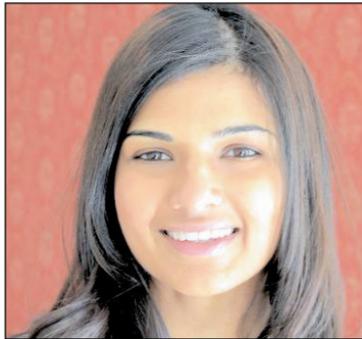
Campbell's view is that fish is always the best option at a restaurant, as it is the leanest protein available. To help keep the fat content down, opt for dry-grilled fish and steamed vegetables, baby potatoes or salad on the side.

Fishmonger in Illovo or Rosebank is a great place to get your seafood fix.

Sushi is a great option, provided you control the portion size. Campbell does not recommend more than a six-piece rice portion and a four-piece sashimi. If that doesn't fill the gap, start with edamame beans and miso soup, or fresh vegetable spring rolls, which are unfried.

Joburgers love their pizza, but the combination of oily cheese and carbo-loaded base does not bode well for the waistline. If you must have pizza, Campbell advises sticking to two or three slices and asking for less cheese, a thinner base and extra vegetables to bulk up the meal without adding kilojoules.

Col'cacchio's Pizza Foro is an



ideal way to beat pizza craving in a healthy way – the pizza is smaller than usual, has a hole in the centre which is filled with salad, and has a thinner base and less cheese than normal.

Woolworths has also recently launched a "lighter eating" range of cook-at-home pizzas, with toppings such as spinach and feta, as well as slow-cooked beef and rocket.

When ordering takeaways, Campbell says that by leaving out the chips and ordering a calorie-free drink such as Coke Light or Sprite Zero, you'll save yourself around 3 500 kilojoules. Be careful of flavoured water, iced tea and smoothies, all of which have added sugars.

Festive-season indulgence often involves more alcohol than normal. Campbell advises choosing singles over doubles when it comes to spirits, and suggests that you try to avoid ciders – opt for a single whisky instead.

If you are a white wine drinker, halve your kilojoule intake by adding plenty of ice, or add soda water to make a spritzer. Try to delay your first alcoholic beverage until you eat your meal – drinking always slows once you start eating.

structured. For the hangman, though, it is his bookmark; he knows its difficulties, its ins and outs, its ubiquity. For those of us who go to gyms (I've been three times – and once was just swimming), food is no longer something you eat when you're hungry, or bored, or socialising, or just standing absent-mindedly by the sink with some cheese in your hand. Those of us who go to the gym – we who count each calorie sweated out on the monitor that can have little to no understanding of how many calories you're burning be-



NO EXCUSE: online food market Timothy and Clover delivers low-calorie organic food to the door.

If you find that eating out leads to temptation, consider visiting a salad bar or a restaurant with a health focus. That way you're still getting to eat out, but aren't tempted with a calorie-laden menu.

New year is a great time to detox by avoiding meat and alcohol for a period of time, and Jozi has an array of restaurants which allow you to do just that.

Gingko (www.gingko.co.za) is a vegan eatery in Parkview. Food is prepared using fresh ingredients with no preservatives or colourants, based on the Paleo diet – wholesome foods from the food groups our hunter gatherer ancestors would have lived on. Try the crunchy sprout and veg salad with avocado and mushrooms, or the nicoise tuna salad with herbed mayonnaise.

Leafy Greens (www.leafy-greens.co.za) in Muldersdrift is a partially raw food, vegan café on an organic farm, with a menu designed from what is available in the garden. Go for breakfast and try the home-baked sour dough toast with homemade jams and raw nut butters, or the organic oats – with homemade raw almond milk or non-GM soy milk with raisins, cinnamon and raw honey or agave.

The Greenside Café (www.thegreensidecafe.co.za) in Greenside is a vegetarian and vegan haven which is just as popular with meat-lovers. It's also an alcohol and smoke-free area – pretty much a first for Joburg. You'll be spoilt for choice at the range of freshly squeezed juices on offer – naartjie is my favourite.

cause it has never met you before and has no eyes to see if you're an incredibly tall woman or an incredibly fat man – will never again be able to snaffle a slice of salami or corner of bread without a stabbing feeling of inevitability, pointlessness and despair.

Once you have burnt off the equivalent of a Bar One, counted every calorie as it passes and realised it takes about five times as long and 10 times the exertion as eating it did, you can never again fully enjoy the experience of tasting the goo, swallowing the clag and smacking your lips.

One of the easiest ways to pile on the kilos is at the office. Canteen food is usually not nutritious, and is often drenched in oil or butter. There are two salad bars in Sandton which leave you with no excuse to eat badly at lunchtime.

Be Leaf and Rockets Express allow you to build your own salad. Choose your base from lettuce, couscous, brown rice or pasta, then select from a range of toppings, including rocket, roast vegetables, tuna, feta and lots more.

Or choose one of their ready-made salads – and grab a smoothie to go. Visit www.be-leaf.co.za and www.rocketrestaurants.co.za.

Eating in and entertaining:

Most of us will either entertain at our homes or be entertained at the homes of friends and family at this time of year.

This can be dangerous territory, but don't be shy about taking along your own healthy snacks. Jade suggests skipping the crisps and fatty biltong, and choosing low-kilojoule snacks such as vegetable sticks with low-fat hummus or freshly popped popcorn flavoured with dried herbs.

Try to reduce the number of starches served with a meal – many families will serve two starches, such as rolls and potato salad, or rice and roast potatoes. Instead, skip one starch and serve an extra

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When eating out, opt for low-fat food and cut starch

vegetable which is higher in nutrients and lower in kilojoules.

Jade advises that you offer light and tasty desserts such as fruit salads or pavlovas and fruit sorbets instead of rich, creamy, high-kilojoule desserts.

If you find shopping for healthy food daunting, consider getting some help. Timothy & Clover is an online food market that seeks to promote and facilitate more conscious living through more conscious eating.

The market stocks natural and artisanal food products – delivered to your door. You can choose to receive the veg box or meat box of the week – filled with pre-selected fresh seasonal produce – or make up your own box by selecting various individual items.

Fruit and vegetables are grown naturally – the market supports a number of small local farms that are growing their produce organically, but which can't afford the organic certification fees, as well as certified organic producers.

Campbell is a registered dietician from Nutritional Solutions (Sandton). She has a special interest in making weight-loss and healthy eating manageable and sustainable in today's fast-paced world. To make an appointment or for weight loss advice you may contact her 011 023 8051, or e-mail jade@nutritionalsolutions.co.za.

You can eat the pasty, but you know full well no good can come of it

HARRIET WALKER

I JOINED a gym this month – it's the first I've been to in almost 10 years, and pretty much the first exercise I've done in just as long, apart from the odd dance-floor workout or trot for the bus.

And since I joined, I've found the way I approach food has become like that of a hangman contemplating death.

For most of us, death is just something that happens at the end of our lives, regardless of the fact that it informs almost everything we do and the way our lives are

structured. For the hangman, though, it is his bookmark; he knows its difficulties, its ins and outs, its ubiquity. For those of us who go to gyms (I've been three times – and once was just swimming), food is no longer something you eat when you're hungry, or bored, or socialising, or just standing absent-mindedly by the sink with some cheese in your hand. Those of us who go to the gym – we who count each calorie sweated out on the monitor that can have little to no understanding of how many calories you're burning be-

cause it has never met you before and has no eyes to see if you're an incredibly tall woman or an incredibly fat man – will never again be able to snaffle a slice of salami or corner of bread without a stabbing feeling of inevitability, pointlessness and despair. Once you have burnt off the equivalent of a Bar One, counted every calorie as it passes and realised it takes about five times as long and 10 times the exertion as eating it did, you can never again fully enjoy the experience of tasting the goo, swallowing the clag and smacking your lips.

Like Eve eating the apple then being booted out of paradise, once such knowledge is acquired, it can never be forgotten. You can eat the cheese-and-onion pasty, but you know full well before, during and after that no good can possibly come of that five minutes in which you felt truly alive. I didn't even want to eat fried chicken at any time of day or night before I started going to the gym and saw the glitch in the matrix. Now I can't stop thinking about it. Sometimes, I think about it while I'm actually eating it. Naturally, my attendance at the

gym has declined in the way church-going has, if you consider last week as the 19th century and tomorrow Armageddon. This much I had predicted. But the knowledge hasn't faded. I will never be able to eat like a Frenchwoman, I realise, nor exercise like a Californian one. So I've decided to take that hangman as my role model, savouring things as if they might not be around again – be that fast food or the treadmill. (Full disclosure: I ate fried chicken three times last week. I haven't been back to the gym since.) – The Independent on Sunday