



How to get through the Christmas time without hurting your health and fertility

Christmas is coming closer and with it lots of occasions and temptations to indulge, especially in sweets and alcohol. Unfortunately, this short-term pleasure can quickly lead to blood sugar and hormonal imbalances and as such increased stress and inflammation levels and reduced energy, well-being and fertility. If you prefer to enjoy this time, but not the side effects, I have some tips for you! This is NOT about restriction, but about conscious and self-love inspired pleasure. Because let's be honest, how pleasurable is it actually to go into sugar-coma in the afternoon or to gain 5 kg – or to simply feel heavy and out of balance?





Choose quality over quantity

Whatever goes into your body should be of the highest quality, because that's what you deserve! Select treats that are REALLY worth it and/or go for a tiny portion and then savor them slowly and consciously with all your senses. The pleasure will be so much more intense and fulfilling than when you gulp down a whole box of <fill in the blank> while being semi-distracted.

Likewise, even if the quality is not top, choose just one or two things that you would really enjoy instead of taking everything. In general, take small pieces/slices. When it comes to alcohol, red wine is better than Glühwein or other sugary drinks. Maybe a tiny sip of cava or wine might suffice to cheer with the others. For the rest, sparkling water (maybe with a bit of orange juice) in a champagne glass can also feel and look quite fancy. Or a hot tea on the Christmas market instead of a Glühwein. If you go by car, it might be easier to just say no altogether to alcohol (and gain points with your colleagues that you drive home ;)). For me personally, this is what works best. I don't have the frustration of "missing out", I still get the pleasure of "the taste", while I don't have to stress about "trashing" my body. Less is really more!

Get into the kitchen

Instead of buying cookies and Christmas sweets from the store, get into the kitchen and make your own! Not only will you be able to control the quality of ingredients (tip: only choose high quality, organic ingredients) and go for more blood sugar-friendly recipes (tip: usually the ones using gluten-free flours like almond, chestnut or coconut flour and combining those with lots of healthy fats like butter, coconut oil, avocado, eggs and/or nuts), but you will also be likely to eat less, because you are aware of the effort that it takes to make them! The pleasure of eating something self-made is also usually bigger than just eating something store-bought. An absolute win-win!

If you are invited to parties, you can also prepare something that you know you can eat and bring that. This does not have to be something sweet and not necessarily home-made either! It might actually be a very welcome change for others, too, to have a savory alternative, such as (high-quality) olives, cheese, ham, dried sausage or simply a mix of nuts and seeds.



Maintain a fertile diet and lifestyle

The more nourished you are, the less likely you are to fall for (big amounts) of unhealthy foods or drinks. This includes nourishing your body with fertile food, adjusted to your individual needs, but always combining slow carbohydrates, clean proteins and healthy fats. This will help prevent blood sugar fluctuations and sweet cravings. Always have some protein/fat rich snack close-by (i.e. nuts, boiled eggs, a tin of fish, olives, cheese...) to avoid being so starved, that the only option you have is to eat all the cookies. Never go hungry to a Christmas party! Sleeping enough, drinking enough water, moving the body in the fresh air and reducing coffee and overall stress levels will also make it less likely to over-indulge in sweets, pastry and alcohol (which only get you into a vicious cycle that will lead to more cravings and stress). Nourish your soul with activities that really matter to you, spend quality time with yourself and with people that uplift you – and also while at a party, have fun beyond food and drinks! Focus on truly connecting with people, on the conversations... dance if possible...

Always act from a place of Love - Love for ALL of you, your body, mind and soul

It all comes down to this: Ask yourself: **What would be the most loving thing to do right now?** The answer can vary depending on the circumstances, your individual constitution, your bigger goals and the quality of the temptation. Generally, if you care about your health and your body, the most loving choice would probably be to say NO to the temptation most of the times - especially if the treat in question is of low-quality (as most of those available commercially or on Christmas markets are). This is especially true if you have a bigger goal, such as recovering from a health-related condition (or preventing it) or optimizing your fertility, or if you know, that your body is simply more sensitive than other peoples' bodies. Even if it makes you feel temporarily frustrated, teaching yourself the concept of "delayed gratification" can be a very loving thing to do, as most parents would confirm. Because even if we usually think about sweets and alcohol as a reward, they are most often rather a punishment to our physiology.



However, sometimes the most loving thing to do is indeed to say YES to the treat, no matter its quality. This could be the case if the taste reminds you of your childhood (and that memory is actually a good one), or if it simply belongs to a certain experience to make it feel "complete". It could also be worth to say YES if eating the treat would make another person extremely happy - like your grandma, who prepared your favorite cake just for you. However, in other cases, saying NO might be what is needed in such situations, in order to set clear boundaries and stop eating just to please others.

There are no clear rules, you really have to judge for yourself from case to case. To do so, really tune in with yourself and be honest about your true needs and motivations. Do you really need that additional cookie or are you simply bored? Does it really make a difference whether you drink Glühwein or a tea on the Christmas market? Do you really need it to complete the experience, or rather to avoid the discomfort of sticking out? Does having dessert really provide you that much of added value and if so, could a few spoon-fuls do the trick? As a general rule of thumb, indulging should bring you EXTREME joy and pleasure, not just some "ordinary" version of it. You should want to really take your time and savor your treat. If you just gulp it down, you are probably betraying yourself about your true motivations.

Be gentle with yourself

In any case, you can be sure that you will not get it "right" all the time. Nobody is perfect or has to be. Your body is strong and can also handle an occasional toxic-overload or over-indulgence (still help it to recover by treating it well the next day ;)). Just do the best you can in any given moment, practice self-love as much as possible, including in the moments that you slip. Learn what you need to learn, but then forgive yourself and move on.

