



Have a
lighter
Christmas!



Expert tips to help you start your
New Year without gaining weight!





Happy Christmas
and **best wishes for the New Year**
from all of us at LighterLife

Your lighter Christmas

Christmas is inescapable, and while it's about far more than food, it can sometimes seem that way, especially when the shops start stocking mince pies in September...

It's little wonder the average person puts on 5-10lb between November and January. But you're not the average person – you've got LighterLife, and you've got the skills at your fingertips so you can avoid becoming part of this statistic.

Make a start right here with your LighterLife guide to a lighter Christmas, packed with tried-and-tested advice and tips for a festive season that's in line with your goals for a healthy, lighter life.



Shape up for Christmas!

If you've currently got weight to lose, start planning for the new you in the New Year with LighterLife's unique weight-loss approach.

- Keep your weight stable over Christmas with our FlexiFasting plans
- Lose weight next year with our TotalFast plan
- Get all the support you need before and after Christmas from your personal Mentor.

Contact your LighterLife Centre, visit lighterlife.com or call **UK 0800 2 988 988**
ROI 1800 92 72 13 for more details.

Festive FlexiFasting

FlexiFasting is as flexible as you want it to be, so it fits with your lifestyle and goals – it's all about what works best for you.

- You choose how many Foodpacks you have along with conventional food choices. For instance, some days each week replace all your meals with four Foodpacks, eating normally on the other days.
- Another option enables you to have some Foodpacks every day plus a conventional meal.
- Rate of weight loss depends on which FlexiFasting plan you choose and your conventional food choices.
- Full details from your Mentor, www.lighterlife.com or our friendly Customer Care team on 0800 2 988 988.





Imagine...

...waking up one morning in early January. Are you pleased with your food choices over Christmas? Do you wish you'd eaten more? Or do you wish you'd eaten less?

Spend some time doing this visualisation now, before Christmas happens. Settle yourself into a quiet, comfortable corner, relax, close your eyes and imagine yourself in the various food situations you'll meet. In your mind's eye, experience all your choices and then "see" yourself making those choices.

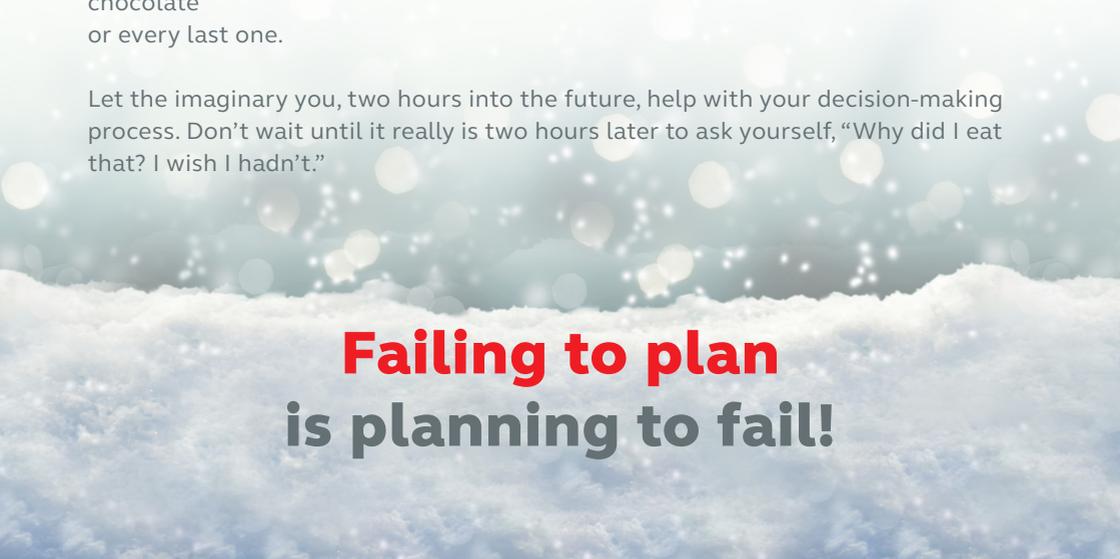
Imagine you've followed your plan and how you feel as a result. See yourself getting dressed and going about your day, meeting people you haven't seen since before Christmas. Then imagine you didn't follow your plan. Again, visualise yourself getting dressed and going about your day, meeting people you haven't seen since before Christmas – and imagine how you'll feel in this situation.

Now reflect on your imaginings...

Doing this visualisation before you make your festive plan will help you decide how you want to be feeling in January, and what you need to do to achieve your goals.

You can also use your visualisation to help you make real-time choices over the holiday period. If you're confronted with a challenging situation – "Shall I eat no chocolates, just one or the whole box?" – take a moment to imagine how you'll feel in two hours' time, depending on whether you ate no chocolates, one chocolate or every last one.

Let the imaginary you, two hours into the future, help with your decision-making process. Don't wait until it really is two hours later to ask yourself, "Why did I eat that? I wish I hadn't."



**Failing to plan
is planning to fail!**

Planning your festive season

- Set clear goals, state them in terms of what you want, rather than what you don't want, and talk about them in the present tense, as if you're already achieving them – say it how you want it to be.
- Anticipate challenges so you can work out ways to deal with them before they arise. Which skills do you have that you can use to meet them? What else do you need?
- Create the most supportive environment you can – arrange texts with people in your group or meeting on Christmas Day and Boxing Day, and explain to those you're spending Christmas with how they can help you.
- Have a good look at beliefs about yourself and other people. Are they true or not? Test each belief and challenge your thinking. Ask yourself what you've learned with LighterLife about yourself in situations like Christmas.
- If you are including food in your Christmas eating plan, or you're cooking for others, plan your menu and food shopping (and try our Christmas recipe ideas, page 9).
- Write your plan down and keep it handy where you can read it a few times a day, just to remind yourself that you have a plan and that you plan to stick to it.

If you choose to go off-plan...

...get back on course with our three-step action plan:

- 1. Stop** When you're faced with a big bill you don't react by going on a spending spree – instead, you spend less to rebalance your budget. Treat your lapse in the same way; acknowledge it, deal with it.
- 2. Think** Review your Christmas plan, your goals and your commitment to what you really want. Challenge your thinking. Come up with some new strategies, or focus on ones that have worked in the past.
- 3. Be kind to yourself** Give yourself space to be human. This helps stop the vicious cycle of feeling bad because you ate off-plan, eating because you feel bad you ate, and on and on and on...

Festive strategies

For TotalFast

Following your TotalFast plan over the festive fortnight is a win-win – not only will you avoid the typical 5-10lb weight gain, you'll also continue to lose weight at your current rate of 2-3lb a week. So by the New Year you could actually be 11-19lb lighter than if you'd overeaten. That sounds like a great way to start the New Year to us!

If you're anxious about saying "no thank you" to meals and snacks that someone else has prepared, think about how often in the past you've eaten more than you wanted for fear of upsetting someone. Explain to them why you're on the LighterLife Programme and how much it means to you, then politely decline.

Emotions can be volatile at Christmas, whether you are alone or with family and friends. Memories can be as bountiful as the chocolate ads on the TV.

For FlexiFasting and Management

To avoid sabotaging your weight goals, try these tips:

- Avoid commercially produced, high-fat foods such as mince pies, chipolatas, pastries and cream-based soups. Instead, try our lower fat recipes (see pg 9).
- If some Christmas foods are triggers for you, give yourself boundaries with them: for example, don't have them at home, but only in a restaurant, where you can't nip into the kitchen and take some more when no one is looking.
- Instead of having carb/sugar-heavy drinks such as beer, lager, cider, sweet sherry, liqueurs and Baileys (which also contains cream), try red wine, dry white wine, dry sherry, a Bloody Mary or spirits with diet mixers. Try a LighterLife double (one measure of spirits with two bottles of calorie-free mixers) or a ginless tonic (good quality calorie-free tonic, lots of ice and a squeeze of lemon).
- If you've bought lots of "treats" for guests, only have these out when guests are present. Out of sight, out of mind...





Mindful festive eating

Mindfulness is being aware of what is happening each moment. Our minds can get stuck in negative thought patterns, in stories from the past and in worries about what might happen. Yet the past is gone, the future doesn't yet exist, so the only moment that matters is *now*.

Being more aware of *now* enables us to become more aware of our negative thoughts and check if they really are true. If they aren't, that creates space for new ways to think, feel and behave, including around how we handle Christmas.

Try these simple but effective ways of being more mindful this festive season:

- Before you eat, check if you're really physically hungry. Imagine a hunger gauge like a car's fuel gauge, with 1 to 10 on the dial. 1 is very hungry (empty) and 10 is full. When you want to eat, check where you are on that gauge. If you're not starving (say around 1-3), what is it you're hungry for – company, stimulation, respite from Christmas visitors? Or are you simply thirsty? Staying well hydrated will help.
- Don't go to a Christmas party physically hungry – this can often lead to overeating. Have a Foodpack or Light Bite beforehand.
- Eat slowly, chew your food well, and stop eating when you feel comfortably full. It can take 15-20 minutes for your brain to register you've physically had enough.
- Avoid distractions while eating from phones, radios, televisions or computers, and don't eat standing up – sit at a table, giving your food your full attention.
- Be mindful of your portion sizes. Studies show that when people use smaller plates, they eat around 25% less without noticing.

**You are in charge of you,
so you have the power to
choose the path to your goal.**



Your TotalFast Christmas menu

If you want to share in the festivities and eat with everyone else, a warming bowl of LighterLife soup is a great option – try our new Super Green Soup with broccoli and spinach, or our Vegetable soup. Or crack open a Spaghetti Bolognese, Shepherd's Pie, Creamy Chicken Noodles or Thai Noodles FastPot and serve in a festive bowl.

For dessert, what about a Chocolate Mugcake, maybe whip up a mousse with a LighterLife shake and our Mousse Mix, or one of our LighterLife festive specials, below?

LighterLife Black Forest Mousse

preparation time 5 minutes

You can also make a simple mousse with just the water, Drink Mix and Mousse Mix if you want to save your Foodpack for later.

200ml (7floz) warm water

1 tsp Fruits of the Forest Drink Mix

2 tsp Mousse Mix

1 Chocolate Shake

1. Whisk together all the ingredients.
2. Leave to set in the fridge for 10 minutes prior to eating.

Serves 1

200 kcal
per serving

**22g protein,
13g carbs, 4g fat**

LighterLife Banana Mousse

preparation time 5 minutes

This luxurious mousse contains a crunchy surprise!

1/2 Banana Shake

5g (1 tsp) LighterLife Mousse Mix

1/2 LighterLife Crispy Peanut Bar, finely chopped

1. Mix the Banana Shake with 100ml of very cold water and the Mousse Mix.
2. Top with the chopped bar.
3. Pop in the fridge to set for 10 minutes, then serve.

Serves 1

173 kcal
per serving

**18g protein,
15g carbs, 4g fat**

LighterLife Sorbet Slush

preparation time 5 minutes

Light and refreshing, our sorbet is ideal for between courses or as a cooling dessert.

Ice and cold water

2 tsp Drink Mix flavour of your choice

1. Half-fill a blender with ice and enough cold water to make it slushy.
2. Add the Drink Mix and blend well.
3. Pour into a chilled glass and serve immediately.

LighterLife Trifle

preparation time 15 minutes

The prep time is worth it for the fab result!

1 LighterLife Raspberry Jelly

1/2 Strawberry Shake

5g (1 tsp) Mousse Mix

15g Vanilla Shake

1/8 Crispy Peanut Bar

1. Mix the Raspberry Jelly and pop into the fridge to set.
2. Mix 1/2 Strawberry Shake with 100ml very cold water, add the Mousse Mix and blend with an electric blender for 90 seconds.
3. When the jelly has set, remove from the fridge, top with the Strawberry, and return to the fridge to chill for 12 minutes.
4. Blend 15g Vanilla Shake with 50ml (3 tbsp) very cold water to a thick consistency, and spoon over the set Strawberry. Pop back in the fridge for two minutes.
5. Finely chop the bar, sprinkle over the trifle, and serve immediately.

Serves 1

6-25 kcal

depending on
Drink Mix

**0g protein,
1g carbs, 0g fat**

Serves 1

203 kcal

per serving

**23g protein,
14g carbs, 5g fat**



Watch Zoe's video
for step by step
instructions.



Lighter Christmas dinner

Lighter Roast Turkey

preparation time 10 minutes

Buy an unbasted turkey – basting can add up to 50% more calories. Cut down on the amount of fat needed to roast by filling the roasting tin with water up to the turkey legs – this steams the turkey and keeps it tender, too.

- 1 turkey, skin removed
- 1 large onion, peeled and halved
- 1 lemon, halved
- 1 small bunch lemon thyme

1. Preheat the oven to 190°C, gas mark 5.
2. Remove the giblets and place the onion and lemon halves in the body cavity. Line a large roasting tin with enough foil to wrap around the turkey. Place the turkey, breast-side up, in the middle of the foil but leave the foil open on each side so the bird is uncovered.
3. Roast for one hour. Turn the turkey over with the breast down, cover it completely with the foil and continue roasting. Half an hour before the cooking time is up, remove the foil to brown the skin.
4. When fully cooked, remove from the oven and leave to rest for 30 minutes breast-side down to keep the juices in the breast meat and to prevent it from drying out.

Serves 8

153 kcal

per serving

**34g protein,
0g carbs, 2g fat**

Serving tip:

Fill half your plate with vegetables. Steaming or microwaving will conserve more of their nutrients than boiling. And there's more to life than sprouts – what about spinach, green beans, asparagus, mangetout, salsify, a side salad...

Try our roast roots idea on page 11.

As a rough guide to cooking times, in an oven preheated to 180°C, gas mark 4:

- For a turkey (including stuffing) under 4kg, cook for 20 minutes per kg plus 70 minutes.
- For a turkey (including stuffing) over 4kg, cook for 20 minutes per kg plus 90 minutes.
- To ensure your turkey is cooked, check it's piping hot all the way through, that the juices run clear when you pierce it and that none of the meat is pink when you cut into it.

Turkey alternatives...

Duck and goose have a very thick layer of fat just under the skin, but you can remove this by taking off the skin before cooking to leave a surprisingly lean meat. Remember to trim off any visible fat from the cavity, too. Fill the roasting tin with water up to the legs to steam-roast the bird and keep it tender. After roasting, leave to rest, covered and breast-side down, for 10-20 minutes to allow the juices to run back from the surface into the meat for a moist result.

If you prefer roast beef, go for a lean cut such as sirloin or fillet; topside, silverside and rump are also very lean, but prior to roasting do remove the sheets of fat that are often fastened around these cuts. To keep the meat moist, first sear the outside by roasting at a high temperature for 10 minutes, then turn the heat down and continue to roast slowly for the remaining cooking time. Allow to rest, covered, for 10-20 minutes before serving.

Lighter Roast Potatoes

preparation time 10 minutes

Desiree, King Edward and Maris Piper are the best varieties for roasting, with a floury, granulated texture that guarantees fluffy insides and a crisp skin.

2kg (4lb 7oz) potatoes
1 litre (1½ pints) LighterLife Savoury Broth

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6. Peel the potatoes and cut into halves or quarters, so they are roughly egg-sized. Put the stock in a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Add the potatoes, bring back up to the boil and simmer for about ten minutes until just tender.
2. Drain, put the lid back on the pan and give the potatoes a good shake to fluff up the outsides, then place them in a non-stick roasting pan and dry roast, turning once, for 45-50 minutes or until golden brown and crispy on the outside.

Serves 8

178 kcal
per serving

5g protein,
39g carbs, 1g fat

Serving tip:

Make half the usual number of roasties, and replace the remainder with boiled or steamed baby new potatoes.

Lighter Roast Parsnips

preparation time 10 minutes

Try baby parsnips, simply scrubbed and sliced rather than peeled – they'll roast more quickly, in around 30 minutes.

700g (1lb 9oz) parsnips

4 tbsp stock made from LighterLife Savoury Broth

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6.
2. Peel the parsnips and cut into thick strips. Boil until not quite tender.
3. Put the stock in a non-stick roasting tin and toss the parsnips in it.
4. Roast for 45 minutes, until crisp and golden, turning once.

Lighter Roast Roots

preparation time 15 minutes

This colourful roast vegetable dish provides two of your “five a day” vegetable servings.

250g (8½oz) swede, peeled and cut into chunks

1 medium turnip (approx 250g or 8½oz), peeled, cut into chunks

250g (8½oz) fennel, quartered

2 medium red onions, quartered

250g (8½oz) baby carrots, whole

600ml (1 pint) LighterLife Savoury Broth

1 large sprig rosemary, leaves removed

freshly ground black pepper

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6.
2. Bring all the vegetables to the boil in a large pan in the stock, and simmer for 5 minutes.
3. Drain and place the veg in a roasting tin, topped with the rosemary and seasoned with black pepper, and roast for 35 minutes, turning once.

Serves 8

52 kcal

per serving

**2g protein,
10g carbs, 1g fat**

Serves 8

48 kcal

per serving

**2g protein,
9g carbs, 1g fat**

Serving tip:

For a lower-fat gravy,
use LighterLife
Savoury Broth.

Lighter Bread Sauce

preparation time 10 minutes

Our reduced-fat version retains all the taste and creamy texture of the old favourite, but with far fewer calories.

- 1 small onion, peeled
- 4 whole cloves
- 500ml (18floz) skimmed milk
- 2 bay leaves
- 150g (5oz) white bread without crusts, chopped
- ½ tsp grated nutmeg
- freshly ground black pepper

1. Stud the onion with the cloves. Put the onion, milk and bay leaves into a pan, bring to the boil and simmer for 15 minutes. Remove the pan from the heat and leave to cool for 1 hour so the flavours infuse into the milk, then remove the onion and bay leaves.
2. Add the bread, nutmeg and black pepper to the milk. Cook over a gentle heat, stirring, for 3-4 minutes until the milk is absorbed into the bread and the sauce is smooth.

Lighter Chestnut & Cranberry Stuffing

preparation time 15 minutes

Add colour and crunch to Christmas dinner with this veg and fruit-packed stuffing.

- 300ml (½ pint) LighterLife Savoury Broth
- 1 medium onion, peeled and chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, peeled and chopped
- 2 stalks celery, chopped
- 4 tbsp fresh parsley, chopped
- 100g (3½oz) white breadcrumbs
- 1 x 200g (7oz) can whole chestnuts, roughly chopped
- 1 egg, beaten
- black pepper to taste
- 100g (3½oz) fresh cranberries

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C, gas mark 6.
2. Put a little stock in a large pan and add the onion, garlic and celery. Cook, without browning, until the onion has softened. Place in a blender with the rest of the stock, plus the parsley, breadcrumbs, chestnuts, egg and black pepper, blend well, then stir in the cranberries.
3. Roll the mixture into 8 balls, place in an ovenproof dish and bake for 30-40 minutes, until browned all over.

Serves 8

65 kcal

per serving

**4g protein,
12g carbs, 1g fat**

-serving tip:

Make bread sauce with skimmed or 1% fat milk, rather than cream

Serves 8

109 kcal

per serving

**4g protein,
21g carbs, 2g fat**

LighterLife Mince Pie Crackers

preparation time 15 minutes

Far lighter in calories but with all the fruity flavour!

2 x filo pastry sheets (48 x 25cm or 19x10in per sheet)

8 tbsp mincemeat

1. Preheat the oven to 180°C, gas mark 4.
2. Divide each filo sheet into 4 strips each measuring roughly 12x25cm (5x10in).
Spread 1 tbsp mincemeat across the end of each strip, not quite up to any of the edges.
3. Roll the filo up to make a cigar shape, and place seam-side down on a non-stick baking tray.
4. Bake for 10-15 minutes until golden.

Christmas Pudding

preparation time 15 minutes

Standard Christmas puddings have less dried fruit than 'luxury' varieties, saving on calories – better still, use our easy recipe to cut down on the calories, without compromising on taste!

350g (12oz) dried mixed fruit

80g (3oz) plain flour

2 tsp mixed spice

50g (1¾oz) fresh breadcrumbs

50g (1¾oz) brown sugar

115g (4oz) grated apple

115g (4oz) grated carrot

2 tsp gravy browning

juice of 1 lemon or orange

4 tbsp skimmed milk

2 medium eggs, beaten

2 tbsp dark treacle

8 tbsp (120ml or 4flop) brandy or rum

1. Mix all the ingredients with half the brandy or rum in a 3lb pudding basin or glass bowl and cover with greaseproof paper.
2. Either steam for 3 hours, or microwave on high power for 10 minutes, leave to stand for 5 minutes, then microwave for a further 5 minutes.
3. Turn out onto a serving plate, spoon the rest of the brandy or rum over the pudding and light!
4. Serve with reduced-sugar custard, made with semi-skimmed or 1% fat milk, or vanilla crème.

Vanilla Crème

preparation time 5 minutes

Enjoy this simple, creamy dessert on its own or as an accompaniment for fruit salad or Christmas pudding.

250g (8½oz) quark

8 drops vanilla essence

Sweetener to taste

1. Blend all the ingredients together.

2. Serve with the mince pie crackers or Christmas pudding.

Serves 8

98 kcal

per serving

**1g protein,
21g carbs, 1g fat**

Serves 8

185 kcal

per serving

**3g protein,
38g carbs, 1g fat**

Serves 8

23 kcal

per serving

**6g protein,
6g carbs, 1g fat**



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