

Diabetes Discourse

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CHRISTMAS SUPPLEMENT

December 2020

Quarterly Newsletter of the Bovell Cancer Diabetes Foundation (BCDF)

This Free Newsletter is a Vital Resource for Diabetes Prevention and for anyone Living with Diabetes

Our Vision

- Enriching lives, one person at a time

Our Mission

- To enrich the lives of people living with or at risk for cancer and diabetes by providing financial resources, support, preventive and management education.

BCDF Activities Include:

- Modest grants to individuals/families affected by cancer or diabetes to enhance their quality of life
- Prevention and management education, and small-group workshops
- Advocacy and referrals to resources for individuals/families affected by cancer or diabetes
- Writing grant proposals and fundraising

BCDF relies on donations to carry out its mission. We are an incorporated, charitable Foundation in the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago. BCDF functions with volunteers only and no paid staff. To contact us with comments, questions or articles, phone 868) 667-2576 or e-mail: adelia@bovellcancerdiabetesfoundation.org;

<http://www.bovellcancerdiabetesfoundation.org>

Disclaimer: This newsletter is meant to educate and inform. It is not to be used as medical advice. Please consult your doctor for medical advice.



*The Board of Directors,
Members and Volunteers of
the Bovell Cancer
Diabetes Foundation
(BCDF) wish each of
you a very merry Christmas
and a happy 2021! We
truly appreciate all the support
you have given us through the
unprecedented year of 2020*

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 1 Christmas Greetings
- 2 Tips for Managing Christmas Dinner
- 2 Alcohol and Diabetes
- 3 Holiday Meal Tips
- 3 Diabetes-Friendly Fruit Cake
- 4 Thanks



TIPS FOR MANAGING CHRISTMAS DINNER

To help manage diabetes at this time, try these tips to make your Christmas meal a little healthier:

- Fill up on the array of vegetables available, but watch out for added festive extras like **honey**
- Keep an eye on your portion sizes, there is likely to be an array of extra dishes so keep in mind how much you are eating
- If you are having a dessert, try to stick to one portion of your sweet treat and think about what it is served with, could you have natural yogurt instead of double cream for example?
- Remember there are no 'forbidden' foods but go easy on the treats. Be mindful about what food you are eating, but do not beat yourself up if you do eat more than you usually would, or choose foods that are not as good for you
- A slight break from the norm is to be expected - enjoy it, then get back on track the next day. Escape the hustle and bustle on Boxing Day and go for an exhilarating walk in the community

ALCOHOL AND DIABETES



Alcohol is often part and parcel of celebrating, but, when you are enjoying yourself, drinking a little more mulled wine than you intended is a common pitfall.

Regardless of whether you have diabetes or not, guidelines recommend that men and women should not regularly consume more than 14 units a week and if you do have as much as 14 units, spread this over three days or more.

If you are trying to manage your weight, remember alcoholic drinks can contain a lot of calories. For a festive alternative to alcoholic Christmas tipples, shake up a virgin mojito (recipe below) when family and friends come to call. If you are drinking, limit drinks with high sugar contents such as liquors, cocktails made with fruit juice and sweet wines. Some festive drinks are higher in saturated fat too, like cream liquors. Remember if you treat your diabetes with insulin and certain type 2 diabetes medications that can cause [hypoglycaemia](#), be aware that drinking alcohol can make [hypoglycaemia](#) more likely.

HOLIDAY MEAL TIPS



As we celebrate the holidays this year, things may look a little different as we respond to COVID-19, but in general, the food remains the same: turkey/chicken, pork, goat meat, side dishes such as rice, pigeon peas, ground provision, pastelles, and fruit cake. Check out these tips for enjoying the meal and keeping diabetes on the back burner.

Master the pre-bolus. Pre-bolusing insulin is when you take insulin at a set timeframe before eating, giving the insulin time to become "active" and combat the blood sugar rise. Timing this dose can make all the difference when it comes to managing blood sugars.

Bring foods you know and trust. Count your blessings and your carbohydrates ahead of time by preparing some foods you are familiar with eating. Many Christmas dishes are ones we eat often, like ground provision, pigeon peas and rice, and dipping into the foods you are comfortable with, dosing for can be a good strategy for staying within your blood sugars targets.

Mind the fat. Fat will be in the meats, side dishes, desserts ... it is everywhere. Just because it does not affect your blood sugar immediately does not mean you would not see a blood sugar bounce from the fat content of your food. Make sure you are accounting for fat – and protein – when you are calculating your meal bolus.

Make a brisk stroll part of the celebration.

After you gobble up your meal, it can feel good to move your body. Clean your plates then lace up your sneakers for a post-meal walk around the village. A nice, brisk walk can help your post-prandial blood sugars from spiking and can set you up for success if you decide on more cake afterwards. Be careful walking after **bolusing** – have some fast-acting glucose in your pockets while you are on the move.

DIABETES-FRIENDLY CHRISTMAS FRUIT CAKE

INGREDIENTS

Butter or oil, to grease
250 g unsalted butter, chopped
125 mL water
165 mL brandy
80 g xylitol
375 g raisins
250 g sultanas
250 g currants
125 g pitted prunes, chopped
100 g dried mixed peel
4 large eggs, lightly beaten
1 tsp. lemon zest, finely grated
1 tsp. orange zest, finely grated
270 g almond meal
100 g natural almonds, chopped
1½ tsp. mixed spice ½ tsp. bicarbonate soda
16-20 whole natural almonds, to decorate

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 160°C/140°C fan. Brush a 23 cm round cake pan with unsalted butter or oil to grease. Line base and side with two layers of baking paper.
2. Place butter, water, brandy, and xylitol in a medium saucepan and stir over low heat until melted and combined. Add raisins, sultanas, currants, prunes, and peel. Bring to the boil, reduce heat and simmer, uncovered for 8 minutes, stirring often.
3. Place mixture into a large bowl and cool to room temperature.
4. Add eggs, lemon zest and orange zest to fruit mixture and use a wooden spoon to mix well. Stir in almond meal, chopped almonds, mixed spice and bicarb soda, mixing well. Spoon mixture into prepared pan. Decorate the top with whole almonds and cover the top of cake with baking paper.
5. Loosely wrap pan in brown paper and bake for 1 hour. Remove the brown paper and reduce temperature to 150°C/130°C. Bake for 1 more hour or until a skewer inserted into the centre comes out clean.
6. Drizzle hot cake with the brandy and set to cool.

