

DON'T BAN THE Easter bunny!

Chocolate season is upon us, but that doesn't mean your healthy eating habits have to go down the rabbit hole.

Apart from the pleasure of being with family and friends, Easter can often be a time for overindulgence and persistent temptation. At HFG, we want you to know that it is possible to have a healthy, balanced Easter. As our dietitian explains, the trick is how to savour treats in moderation. What's life without chocolate, anyway?

Survive the chocolate fest

- * Buy individually portioned chocolate, rather than a jumbo bag or large block.
- * Opt for quality dark chocolate over a large quantity of cheap compound choc.
- * Give friends or family treats left around the house after Easter.
- * Continue to eat your usual regular, healthy meals: breakfast, lunch and dinner.

ENJOY Easter ... at Easter

Chocolate bunnies and cream-filled eggs have been popping up on supermarket shelves since January – which is plenty of time for those choccie cravings to build up! But there's

no need to start filling your baskets with Easter eggs just yet. **Wait until Easter actually arrives. That way, the temptation isn't calling from the pantry for months – and you'll still enjoy your favourite treat at Easter.**



THIS TIME TRY SOMETHING NEW

If your family always buys traditional chocolate-based treats for Easter, consider starting a new trend and opt for a gift of a different kind. **Give a bunch of flowers, a visit to a beauty salon or even a movie voucher.**

Non-chocolate gifts are still a thoughtful gesture, and they mean you won't have Easter eggs tempting you from the depths of your pantry for months to come. ➤

plan your sweet fix

It wouldn't be Easter without rich chocolate or a warm hot cross bun.

But, before you get together with family and friends, take some time to hatch a plan to avoid overdoing it. Do you want to have a couple of chocolate eggs for dessert, or enjoy a hot cross bun with mum over a cup of tea? **Whatever takes your fancy, take a moment to think about what you're going to enjoy, and when.** With a little assistance from that willpower muscle, it will help to curb unwanted kilojoules and last-minute excesses.





JOIN THE DARK SIDE

If you're a dark chocolate fan, here's some really egg-cellent choc news! Swedish researchers have discovered that **just a small amount of high-percentage cocoa chocolate (70 per cent and over) helps to fill you up – so you'll eat**

fewer kilojoules at your next meal. Another big benefit of good-quality dark choc is its flavanol content. Flavanols are antioxidants with a myriad of health benefits, such as lowering your blood pressure – and cocoa has them in abundance!

Have fun!

Forget what the Easter bunny wants you to think – Easter isn't all about scoffing down chocolate. **Take the focus off food and instead look forward to spending time with loved ones** over the longest long weekend before Christmas. Think about ways you can get active outdoors and enjoy a break from the daily grind.



PORITION perfectly

There are plenty of sensibly portioned sweet treats on supermarket shelves – you just have to sift through kilo-sized blocks and life-sized bunnies to find them! When searching for your chocolate fix, look for individually wrapped treats with less than 600kJ (140cal) per serve for a smart snack.

Kid's-size chocolates are also a great option. Another way around the chocolate pool is to stick to four squares at a time. That's enough to satisfy your sweet tooth and won't leave you feeling deprived.

Text: Melissa Meier & Amanda Ursell. Photos: iStock. Product images: Jennifer Soo.

Don't make a meal of it

Childhood dreams were made of chocolate for breakfast. And now it's Easter, right? Unfortunately, letting a chocolate treat turn into a meal is a quick way to fall off the finely balanced Easter bandwagon. **Before you nibble on your chocolate bunny, make sure you've had a healthy meal full of vegetables and lean protein first – it'll help keep you feeling full and satisfied. And don't forget to keep healthy snacks on hand – it will make it much easier to avoid a chocolate binge.**



PRACTICE mindful eating

Before you dig into the hot cross buns, ask yourself if you really feel like eating one. Are those cravings because you're in dire need of a sweet fix, or are you just bored? Perhaps you're eating simply because it's offered and not because you really feel like it. Is your stomach really rumbling, or is your mouth watering? Of course, if you really feel like it, go for it, but if you don't...you can always save it for later. When you really want that treat, let the warm bun melt in your mouth... and take the time to relish its flavours. **hfg**

TREATS WE LOVE

Avoid the dreaded chocolate coma with these bite-sized Easter treats!



Lindt Mini Gold Bunnies

2 bunnies = 468kJ (112cal)



Woolworths Mini Fruit Hot Cross Bun

1 mini bun = 591kJ (141cal)



Gingerbread Folk Chocolate Gingerbread Bunny*

1 bunny = 485kJ (116cal)