

Easter feasting

Healthy eating tips for a guilt-free Easter

Words: **Erina Starkey**

Yes, chocolate does contain powerful antioxidants but that doesn't give you permission to eat a whole bunny, seven Easter eggs and a bilby.

To help you and your family have a happy and healthy Easter, nutritionist and health scientist Kristen Beck, of Beck Health & Nutrition in Collaroy, shares her top tips.

All in moderation

It's OK to eat chocolate at Easter, just be mindful of how much you eat and how generous the Easter Bunny really needs to be, Beck says. "It's all about moderation. Chocolate and hot cross buns can definitely be a part of Easter celebrations but it's also important to keep eating the healthy stuff throughout the

holidays, such as vegetables, fruit, fish, lean meats, legumes nuts, seeds, dairy and wholegrains."

Go dark

When it comes to buying chocolate for the family some types are better than others, says Beck.

"Ideally, look for a chocolate that lists cocoa as the first ingredient. Dark chocolate, with the highest percentage of cacao, is best both in terms of antioxidant content as well as sugar content. Basically, the higher the cacao content, the less sugar the chocolate will contain," she says.

Confine it to a day

Rather than gorging for the entire Easter holidays, limit your celebrations to just one day.

"Traditionally, as kids, the only day we actually used to receive Easter confectionery was Easter Sunday. And hot cross buns were really only made and consumed in the week or so around Easter," Beck says. "These days hot cross buns hit the supermarket shelves in the first weeks of January, with shiny chocolate Easter eggs appearing not long after."

Get cooking

A great way to ensure your Easter celebrations do not get out of hand is to make and prepare your own food or treats, Beck says. "That way, you at least have an understanding of the quantities of fat, sugar and salt you are consuming."

"Research constantly confirms that food prepared outside the home will almost

always contain more sugar, salt and fat because these are the flavours that make food taste good."

Make it about family

Easter does not have to be a time of indulgence. "Enjoy each other's company, cook together, get outside and be active together," Beck says. "And try switching off and not checking emails or social media for a few days, too."

Fact file

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