



MY KETO SURVIVAL GUIDE

By Emma Williams CEO/Founder

Some families embarking on their first keto Christmas will be facing the Holiday Season with fear and trepidation and when I speak to some of these families they can be so anxious about things that it really becomes a major factor, especially if they are having other family members to stay that are perhaps not as understanding and think that “it is such a shame” that little Jonny can’t fill his face with chocolate from dawn ‘til dusk. I remember having this conversation during our first keto Christmas and my response was “so you would prefer Matthew to have loads of seizures like he did last year?” Nothing was ever mentioned again— not in my presence anyway! Some may think that my response was harsh or a little unfair but it was the truth and sometimes we do have to remind people that we are doing this to help our loved ones, we do NOT embark on this with some kind of weird desire to make extra work for ourselves or to be cruel, so some support and help would be more appreciated from our nearest and dearest.

I absolutely LOVE Christmas, it is my favourite time of year and being somewhat of a foodie as well I do tend to spend a lot of time in the kitchen cooking (watch this space for the usual ‘sponsored slim’ in January!) so I was determined that just because Matt was on keto, he was still going to have some lovely food over Christmas time and I thought I would share with you how I managed a keto Christmas (and I ended up doing 5 of them for Matthew) and here at MF we have supported many other families through their Holiday celebrations too.

1. Write a Plan.

If you are staying home for Christmas, plan your menu of what you would do NORMALLY, then work with that menu to see what needs to be done to tweak it to make it keto friendly to the version of the diet that you or your child is on. You will see an example of some of the changes I made to Matthew’s menu further on. If you are having dinner with family then contact them in advance and explain the situation and ask what they are planning on cooking and then adjust to a keto menu from there and take any extra’s that you may need.

2. Speak to your Dietitian.

There may be a way that an ‘extra’ snack could be incorporated into Christmas day which could give a little extra to work with but this will be very much dependant on whether you have a very sensitive child or not. Some

children cannot tolerate any 'extra' whatsoever— **this is something you MUST speak to your dietitian about though.**

3. Get your recipes ready with appropriate weights.

Have all your menu sheets/quantities written down and in the kitchen ready for each meal, so when you are serving up you know exactly what quantities you will need and it won't take you long to weigh the amounts out.

4. Concentrate on other parts of the celebrations apart from Food.

Although we know that food does play a very big part of Christmas time and there is a huge emphasis on the 'Christmas Dinner' - for most children it is about presents and if Santa is going to visit. Make the most of this part of things where you can. Also silly games are always a good one, lots of charades! Buy some extra crackers as well, most kids love pulling crackers to see what is inside and wear the silly hat and tell daft jokes—so use them! These are all good 'distractions' just in case your child gets fixated on wanting to eat something.

5. Don't Leave Food/Nibbles out and freely available!

When I served Christmas dinner I served the majority of it on the plates and just had the vegetables on the table from which I would have the scales by the side of my place setting to weigh out Matthew's portion OR I would put everything in serving dishes along my kitchen worktop (where Matthew couldn't get to) and people would come and help themselves— a bit like a buffet style dinner. I never left any food/nibbles out where Matthew could get to them or see them.

6. Have plenty of the foods/snacks that they CAN have and they enjoy.

If they have a favourite snack then make sure you have plenty made/available. I had one child that loved celery dipped into garlic mayo, very useful as you can make this for everyone so again, it looks the same and blends in with everyone else's food. Matthew also loved his peanut butter/chocolate button sweets that I would make for him. So I made sure there were plenty of those weighed up in the appropriate portions.

7. PICK YOUR BATTLES!

If your child has got a nice new DVD from Santa and wants to watch it—does it really matter if they have their dinner in front of the TV as a treat on Christmas Day? If it reduces everyone's stress levels then no, it really doesn't matter in the grand scheme of things. One mum didn't usually allow her child to have fizzy drinks but over Christmas she did as a special 'Christmas Treat'. So long as there are no medical implications/side effects then try to relax as much as you can and all of you can enjoy the festive time.

It is worth spending a couple of hours preparing all your lists and menus and batching up snacks etc where you can, so that you can enjoy as much of

Christmas as possible and you are not frazzled through the festive season or worrying about the next keto meal. The ketogenic diet is all about being organised with your child's food – organisation is the key to making the keto diet work for your family whether it is Christmas or not – you just have to be a little more organised at Christmas time!



MATTHEW'S CHRISTMAS KETO MENU

	Christmas Day Menu:	Keto Version:
Breakfast:	Smoked Salmon and Scrambled Egg Bucks Fizz	Same Orange Juice/Diet Lemonade
Lunch:	Roast Turkey Bacon/Chipolata Sausages Roast Potatoes Vegetables Bread Sauce Gravy Christmas Pudding or Trifle	Same Same Roast Celeriac Same Keto Cracker Keto Gravy Christmas Spice Muffin & Cream or Keto Trifle (Jelly/Berries & whipped double cream)
Tea:	Cold Meats Salad Mayo and/or pickles Christmas Cake	Same Same Mayo/Cream Cheese Christmas Keto Muffin

Snacks:	Veg/Dips	Same (mayo or cream cheese dip)
	Nuts/Crisps	Macademia Nuts Celeriac Crisps
	Sweets	Keto Chocolates



Other useful tips and ideas from some of our team.....

1. Think fancy presentation; pretty foil sweetie cases, wooden skewers to eat chicken from whilst dipping into a mayo or peanut butter satay type dip. Edible Glitter is fantastic stuff!
2. Think tasty fats! Roast lamb/duck/smoked mackerel is great as they have lots of natural fat.
3. Get an Advent calendar with pockets to fill with small toys rather than sweets.
4. Make the most of all the sugar free pop, freeze it to make lollies or make Ice cream floats by putting keto ice cream on top of a glass of pop!
5. Jelly sweets: make some sugar free jelly up using just half the amount of water or even diet lemonade and then set in the fridge. If you wanted to use some fat up with these jelly sweets then use just enough water to dissolve the jelly granules and then add the double cream/calogen/liquigen or butter—depending on the quantities you are needing to use.
6. Keto-Ice cream/frozen cream lollies are great—especially if flavoured with some DaVinci Syrups/sugar free flavourings.
7. Use EKM Mealplanner—that way you have the flexibility to

make your own meals up and always take it with you if you can when you are visiting relatives/friends. It is not web based so you can download it to your own laptop and it will give you peace of mind if you have to make any last minute changes to a recipe.

8. DON'T START A KETO DIET A WEEK BEFORE CHRISTMAS!!!

The helpline is open all over the Holiday Season so please don't think that you are on your own, call or text on 0788 4054811

HAPPY CHRISTMAS FROM ALL AT MATTHEW'S FRIENDS