



## Making the most of the off season.



**Anthony Meade**, resident sports dietitian at Wakefield Sports Clinic has a look at the common off season nutritional mistakes and what you can do to avoid the weight gain/ weight loss merry go round.

If you are reading this thinking that the off season is a great time to gain weight then you're absolutely right. The thing is for most athletes it's the opposite of what they really need. Managing fitness and weight over the off season will have you in better shape come the inevitable pre-season and may help you achieve the sporting goals you've set and might have you *leading* the pack not chasing it!

### **Beware the end of season trip**



While the end of season trip might seem like a good idea during the cold winter months it can definitely be the undoing of many athletes. The excess alcohol and poor food choices that inevitably follow can leave several kilos of reminders to make up for what might otherwise remain a blur. To avoid the aftermath either reduce the alcohol content (eg choose light beer) or reduce the amount consumed (eg go 1 and 1 alcoholic drink to water) and you'll be better off. Be careful with food choices especially when out. Eating before you leave home can reduce the effects of alcohol and reduce the temptation to overeat.

### **Reduce your food volume.**

Put pretty simply, if you aren't training as much you don't need as much energy so you don't need to eat so much. So if you continue to eat like you are training chances are the kilos will pile on. Eating is often habitual, but rather than change your diet completely simply to reduce the volume and you'll be on the way to a healthier off season.

### **Be festive not full during the holiday season.**



Office parties, Christmas breakups, family feasts and New Years hangovers are all part of the festive season and a good way to gain a few kg's. When you need to bring food and drinks with you then make a positive stand and bring something healthy. Bring a healthy salad or fruit platter instead of chips and dips. Choose lean meats, fish and poultry for the BBQ rather than the easy option sausages and chops.

Don't let one bad day destroy your summer. Get back on track quickly if you have an unhealthy day.

### **Getting back into it.**

If you've gained weight during the off season then keep food volume under control when you resume training. Training will be hard but that doesn't mean you'll have exhausted your fuel supplies and need to eat huge amounts if you have a sensible structured program.

**For an individual assessment, call Anthony Meade at the Wakefield Sports Clinic on 8232 5833.**