

A guide for walking off Christmas Day treats

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Credit: AI-generated image ([disclaimer](#))

Many of us will overindulge in the festive fare on offer this Christmas, but we might think twice about eating something on the naughty side if that food features a label noting the time it takes to burn off that particular food.

WA research has found labelling foods with the amount of time it would take for an average person to work off the calories is more effective at

helping consumers understand its nutritional value than the Daily Intake Guide (DIG) thumbnails.

It might come as a shock knowing a cup of eggnog will take the [average person](#) 49 minutes to walk off, whereas a cup of seedless cherries takes 22 minutes and 25g—or two pieces—of Cadbury Roses equates to 29 minutes.

Those reaching for Christmas tippie might think twice, with the research finding it takes about 26 minutes to burn off a glass of wine—or two hours and 12 minutes per bottle.

The single energy DIG thumbnail on packaging had no meaning for consumers, and had the same effect as having no nutritional label at all, Edith Cowan University Collaborative Research Network director Owen Carter says

"They based all the judgments on the [nutritional value](#) of a food just simply on the pictures," Associate Professor Carter says.

"If a Tim Tam was labelled with five per cent of your daily energy intake, they say 'oh great, that means I can have about 20', so we concluded rather quickly that no one really understood what kilojoules translated to."

Using information about the assumed average adult person—a 70kg male—the study calculated the Equivalent Walking Time (EWT) of foods based on a walking pace of 5km/h.

Researchers presented 1000 Australians with a range of unfamiliar foods, including tinned cola from China, which had a mix of EWT and DIG labels.

Participants were then asked to rate the healthiness of the products and how easily they would put on weight from consuming them.

The EWT label makes it obvious how difficult it is to exercise sufficiently to lose weight, A/Prof Carter says.

"If one Tim Tam is 24 minutes walking, and two is 48, they think they shouldn't have had that third one," he says.

Consumers might also be surprised to note the time it would take to counteract the calories in some of their favourite Christmas treats, including fruit mice pies, one of which equates to 52 minutes of walking.

This article first appeared on [ScienceNetwork Western Australia](#) a science news website based at Scitech.

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