

# Strive To Thrive

Pathways... Leading the way to a better feeling you!

## Tips for a Thinner Thanksgiving

By Kathleen M. Zelman, MPH, RD, LD

Thanksgiving only comes around once a year, so why not go ahead and splurge? Because gaining weight during the holiday season is a national pastime. Year after year, most of us pack on at least a pound (some gain more) during the holidays -- and keep the extra weight permanently.

But Thanksgiving does not have to sabotage your weight, experts say. With a little know-how, you can satisfy your desire for traditional favorites and still enjoy a guilt-free Thanksgiving feast. After all, being stuffed is a good idea only if you are a turkey!

### Get Active

Create a calorie deficit by exercising to burn off extra calories before you ever indulge in your favorite foods, suggests Connie Diekman, MEd, RD, former president of the American Dietetic Association (ADA). "Eat less and exercise more" is the winning formula to prevent weight gain during the holidays," Diekman says. "Increase your steps or lengthen your fitness routine the weeks ahead and especially the day of the feast."

Make fitness a family adventure, recommends Susan Finn, PhD, RD, chair of the American Council on Fitness and Nutrition: "Take a walk early in the day and then again after dinner. It is a wonderful way for families to get physical activity and enjoy the holiday together."

### Eat Breakfast

While you might think it makes sense to save up calories for the big meal, experts say eating a small meal in the morning can give you more control over your appetite. Start your day with a small but satisfying breakfast -- such as an egg with a slice of whole-wheat toast, or a bowl of whole-grain cereal with low-fat milk -- so you won't be starving

when you arrive at the gathering.

"Eating a nutritious meal with protein and fiber before you arrive takes the edge off your appetite and allows you to be more discriminating in your food and beverage choices," says Diekman.

### Lighten Up

Whether you are hosting Thanksgiving dinner or bringing a few dishes to share, make your recipes healthier with less fat, sugar, and calories.

"There is more sugar and fat in most recipes than is needed, and no one will notice the difference if you skim calories by using lower calorie ingredients," says Diekman.

Her suggestions:

- Use fat-free chicken broth to baste the turkey and make gravy.
- Use sugar substitutes in place of sugar and/or fruit purees instead of oil in baked goods.
- Reduce oil and butter wherever you can.
- Try plain yogurt or fat-free sour cream in creamy dips, mashed potatoes, and casseroles.

### Police Your Portions

Thanksgiving tables are bountiful and beautiful displays of traditional family favorites. Before you fill your plate, survey the buffet table and decide what you're going to choose. Then select reasonable-sized portions of foods you cannot live without.

"Don't waste your calories on foods that you can have all year long," suggests Diekman. "Fill your plate with small portions of holiday favorites that only come around once a year so you can enjoy desirable, traditional foods."

### Skip the Seconds.

Try to resist the temptation to go back for second helpings.

"Leftovers are much better the next day, and if you limit yourself to one plate, you are less likely to overeat and have more room for a delectable dessert," Diekman says.

Choose the Best Bets on the Buffet. While each of us has our own favorites, keep in mind that some holiday foods are better choices than others.

"White turkey meat, plain vegetables, roasted sweet potatoes, mashed potatoes, defatted gravy, and pumpkin pie tend to be the best bets because they are lower in fat and calories," says Diekman. But she adds that, "if you keep your portions small, you can enjoy whatever you like."

### Slowly Savor

Eating slowly, putting your fork down between bites, and tasting each mouthful is one of the easiest ways to enjoy your meal and feel satisfied with one plate full of food, experts say. Choosing whole grains, fruits, vegetables, broth-based soups, salads, and other foods with lots of water and fiber add to the feeling of fullness.

Spread out the food and fun all day long. At the Finn family Thanksgiving gathering, they schedule dessert after a walk, while watching a movie together.

"We eat midday, and instead of another meal at dinnertime, we continue the feast with dessert a few hours after the main meal," Finn explains.

### Go Easy on Alcohol

Don't forget those alcohol calories that can add up quickly.

"Have a glass of wine or a wine spritzer and between alcoholic drinks, (or) enjoy sparkling water," says Diekman. "this way you stay hydrated, limit alcohol calories, and stay sober."

### Be Realistic

The holiday season is a time for celebration. With busy schedules and so many extra temptations, this is a good

time to strive for weight maintenance instead of weight loss.

"Shift from a mindset of weight loss to weight maintenance," says Finn. "You will be ahead of the game if you can avoid gaining any weight over the holidays."

### Focus on Family and Friends

Thanksgiving is not just about the delicious bounty of food. It's a time to celebrate relationships with family and friends.

"The main event should be family and friends socializing, spending quality time together, not just what is on the buffet," says Finn.



**HEALTHY ROUTINE  
FOR NOVEMBER:**

*Put your fork down  
and sip water in  
between bites!*

## Got Gratitude? It's Not Just for Thanksgiving!



Having a yearly date set aside to be thankful is a reminder that being grateful everyday matters for both physical and mental health and well being. Thanksgiving is one of those rare holidays that is generally pretty low key, not very commercial (e.g., you aren't expected to spend lots of money buying Thanksgiving gifts after all), and a day to give thanks and be grateful. Of course, for some it's a day to watch football, eat too much, and spend time with friends and family too (which you might be grateful for or not). Thanksgiving is celebrated not only in the United States but in Canada (on October 1st) and else-

where. For me, it is an important reminder to be grateful every day.

Research has well demonstrated that those who have an ongoing tendency to be grateful experience better physical and psychological health and well being. They tend to be more optimistic, sociable, and engaged in life. They are less susceptible to depression, anxiety, anger, and others negative emotions that can lead to health damaging behaviors and functioning. Being grateful is good for your health.

I have a clinical patient who always finds what is wrong with people... her family, her neighbors, and most everyone she interacts with. No matter how gracious and kind people are to her, she finds a way to criticize. Needless to say, she has few friends and many people avoid her. We have worked hard over several years to help her learn to be more grateful and to

experience the glass as half full rather than half empty when interacting with others. It's been working. She has more satisfying relationships, a wider circle of friends, and her family members have been more eager to spend time with her now. As she has become more grateful she has had better health too. She's a good example of how working to be more grateful can have both expected and unexpected positive benefits.

A second clinical patient I see is always very grateful and positive. Although he has dealt with some major stressors and tragedies, he maintains a spirit of gratefulness at all times. Some think he's in denial but I see it very differently. He spent a number of years in a refugee camp overseas before coming to the USA. When people ask him how he maintains such a positive and grateful stance in the face of many stressors and some serious problems he smiles and

says that after spending so many years in a refugee camp each and every day he has in the USA is a gift and reason to be grateful no matter what happens. His grateful attitude has served him well in coping with stressors and in providing him with a wide circle of friends and supporters.

So, as we approach Thanksgiving this week, what are you grateful for? Can you continue to focus on gratefulness even when the holiday is over? Can you make gratefulness a part of your daily experience? Doing the right thing for yourself and others means finding ways to be grateful for all that you have and hold. Personally, I start my day thanking God for giving me another day and try my best to remind myself that whatever I get day-to-day is gift and blessing. I am certainly grateful for much. How about you? What are you grateful for?

By: Thomas Plante, Ph.D.

Adapted from [psychologytoday.com](http://psychologytoday.com)

## Roast Turkey Breast

**A healthy and delicious alternative to cooking a whole turkey!**

### INGREDIENTS

- 5 1/2 lbs of Turkey Breast
- 2 T of Olive Oil
- 1/2 T of Black pepper
- 1/2 T Oregano
- 1/2 T Rosemary
- 1/2 T Garlic powder

### PREPARATION

1. Pat Turkey dry with paper towel
2. Combine olive oil and seasonings in a small bowl.
3. Brush turkey with seasonings. 4. Brush the turkey with the seasoned oil.
4. Roast the turkey at 375 for 2 - 2 1/2 hrs or until done.

### NUTRITION

- Servings Per Recipe: 10
- Calories: 285.0
- Total Fat: 6.9 g
- Cholesterol: 107.3 mg
- Sodium: 2,532.3 mg
- Total Carbs: 10.9 g
- Dietary Fiber: 1.3 g
- Protein: 42.6 g



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*Pathways' Strive for Five Mission Statement:*

*Pathways' Strive for Five Program is dedicated to helping consumers living with mental illness to achieve a higher quality of life by enhancing one's nutritional awareness and helping consumers to become more active. Pathways understands that our consumers will be able to live longer, happier, and healthier lives by providing them with the tools, knowledge and resources any person would need to achieve a physically and mentally well-balanced life.*