

Thanksgiving Through New Years!

Courtesy of Linda Arpino, MA, RD, CDN

Our ancestors had the greatest diet, rich grains, free range meats without hormones and veggies and fruits without pesticides! Get back to the basics, go organic! At the Thanksgiving holiday, we want to provide you with some simple ways to make your big meal as healthy and delicious as possible. Many of the traditional foods served during Thanksgiving can be healthy – just avoid the butter, cream, salt and sugar. Be sure to visit www.lifefocusnutrition.com for more healthy resources for you and your family.

When planning your holiday meal (and all the leftovers), try this:

1. **Start small.**

When it comes to Thanksgiving, one concern is not just WHAT you're eating, but HOW MUCH. You can enjoy a variety of favorite family recipes if you have small portions of high-calorie foods such as casseroles and desserts and fill up on lighter fare such as vegetables and lean turkey.

2. **Goble Goble or NOT.**

Turkey is a great source of lean protein. It's healthiest if you skip the skin and just eat the white meat. If you prefer the dark meat, mix and match to get a little extra flavor without adding too much fat. **Vegetarian? Try our wonderful Cranberry Pecan Stuffing Recipe in my book Eat Fit Be Fit, omit the animal sources such as egg, add tofu is optional.**

3. **Be sweet on sweet potatoes.**

Sweet potatoes are a source of vitamin A, vitamin C, potassium and fiber. They can make a tasty side dish or dessert. A healthy way to prepare them is to cut them in half, sprinkle them with orange juice or crushed pineapple and cinnamon, and pop them into the oven. Skip the marshmallows and loads of butter, instead use the sweet potato recipes in my book, **Eat Fit, Be Fit: Health and Weight Management Solutions!**

4. **Kick the canned cranberry.**

Cranberries are packed with antioxidants that can help keep you healthy. Unfortunately, canned cranberry sauce is also often packed with sugar and calories you don't need. Try making your own by mashing fresh cranberries with a generous splash of balsamic vinegar or apple juice concentrate or fresh oranges chopped up. Check out the **Eat Fit, Be Fit** recipe!

5. **Pick a pumpkin.**

Pumpkin is low in fat, low in calories, and loaded with potassium, vitamin A and vitamin C. Make pumpkin pies with canned, evaporated fat-free milk, no sugar in the recipe, silken tofu not eggs even a graham cracker crust, and light or fat-free whipped topping for a light and tasty dessert. Try **Eat Fit, Be Fit's**: New Pumpkin Pie with Old fashion Flavor recipe! Also the Pumpkin Bread and soup!

6. **Stuff with more veggies and less bread.**

Opt for less sausage in your stuffing and add more onions, celery, vegetables or fruits such as dried cranberries or apples to make a lower calorie version of the old standby. Try using whole-wheat bread to make it an even healthier option. See **Eat Fit, Be Fit**: Cranberry Pecan Stuffing Recipe

7. **Go fruity!**

Baked apples and poached pears are perfect, light ways to end any autumn meal. See Recipe in **Eat Fit, Be Fit** for Baked Apples

8. **Avoid greasy gravy.**

Use a fat separator or refrigerate the pan juices and skim the fat off before making the gravy. This can cut out a significant amount of fat. See the Mushroom Sauce in the **Eat Fit, Be Fit Book!**

9. **Sacrifice fat, not flavor.**

Use low-fat buttermilk, low-sodium chicken stock, fat free milk or yogurt in place of cream or whole milk in dishes like mashed potatoes, whipped sweet potatoes or butternut squash. You'll get a creamy consistency and loads of flavor, minus the unnecessary fat and calories. Add fresh parsley!

10. **Steam. Mash and Herb.**

NE THT

Be sure to visit www.HealthierGeneration.org for more Go Healthy tips for you and your family.
modified from the NYS Dept of Health.