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WELLNESS WEEKLY

Tips for a Thinner Thanksgiving

Enjoy the holiday feast without the guilt -- or the weight gain.

Thanksgiving only comes around once a year, so why not go ahead and splurge? Because 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.

Get Active

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. Try taking a walk early in the day and 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.

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. A few suggestions are:

instead of oil in baked goods.

potatoes, and casseroles.

Police Your Portions

you're going to choose. Then select reasonable-sized portions of foods you cannot live without. Most importantly, skip the seconds.



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.

Slowly Savor

Eating slowly, putting your fork down between bites, and tasting each mouthful is one of the easiest ways to enjoy your

Choosing whole grains, fruits, vegetables, broth-based soups, feeling of fullness.

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.

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.