

Healthy Holiday Eating this Thanksgiving

Make quick and simple upgrades to your Thanksgiving this year to stay on track with your health goals while still pleasing your taste buds!

It's all too easy to splurge on Thanksgiving, which can often lead to feelings of guilt or discomfort from overeating. The average person eats almost double the number of calories they need for one day on Thanksgiving. Use this holiday season as a time to make a positive change and to set some upgraded goals to keep yourself on track. While eating healthfully may seem like a daunting task this time of year, it is completely do-able with simple swaps. A few extra minutes of prep and planning go a long way for your health!

Start the day by eating breakfast

Don't skimp on breakfast in anticipation of "saving calories" later in the day. Eating breakfast has been shown to jumpstart your metabolism, help control your hunger, and can lead to better choices and portion sizes when it's time for the appealing food choices later on. Read more about the [importance of breakfast during the holidays](#).

Choose Whole Grains for Baking During the Holidays

Another easy way to boost the nutrition in your meals is by simply making an effort to use whole grains for baking during the holidays. Make a place for [whole grains](#) at the holiday table this year - whether it's in one, or a few of your usual dishes! Not only are whole grains an important part of a heart-healthy diet, but the fiber it provides can help prevent over-eating. Did you know that fiber also decreases inflammation? Inflammation can lead to heart disease and heart attacks. Your entire family will be thankful that you are looking out for their heart health! Here are some easy ways to get whole grains onto your holiday table and [make healthy baking substitutions](#).

- When making baked goods (like pies) use whole-wheat flour or whole wheat pastry flour instead of white flour. Or try ½ whole wheat and ½ white flour.
- Use whole-wheat bread in your stuffing or serve whole-wheat dinner rolls instead of white rolls. Try these tasty gluten-free [sweet potato oat flour biscuits](#) or [amaranth cornbread](#).
- Add a new dish! Make a delicious quinoa or wheat berry salad instead of the traditional stuffing. Load it up with roasted veggies like peppers and [butternut squash](#) for some additional vitamins, mineral, and antioxidants!

Make colorful dishes for a colorful meal

The different colors of foods provide unique health benefits, so make it a goal to have at least 3 colors in the dishes you make. Here are a few benefits of each color, with a popular and easy

food choice to include in your meal:

- **Red** foods also have antioxidants like lycopene and anthocyanins that serve as great anti-inflammatory agents. Look for ways to add in [beets](#), tomatoes, red bell peppers, and chili flakes for a boost!
- **Orange & Yellow** foods are packed with Vitamin C and antioxidants great for heart health and your immune system. Find ways to mix in sweet potatoes, yams, [carrots](#), yellow onion, pumpkin, and yellow or orange bell peppers.
- **Green** foods contain lutein, which promotes good vision and healthy skin. Add in some dark leafy greens, green beans, asparagus, or broccoli.
- **Blue & Purple** foods have powerful flavonoids that decrease the risk of heart disease and decrease memory loss. Mix in some purple cabbage, purple potatoes, eggplant, and [blueberries](#).

Each year provides the opportunity to get creative and try new things. Choose one or two things to focus on to feel great and to stay on track with your health goals!