

10 Tips to Enjoy Thanksgiving (or any social gathering) without Blowing Your Diet

1. Plan Your Water Intake

- Good rule of thumb: Drink half your bodyweight in ounces
- You want to be hydrated that day so it's not mistaken for hunger
- However, if you're guzzling a lot of water with your meal it can actually have a negative impact on your digestion.
- It's true that the entire digestive system works more efficiently when it's well-hydrated, but this doesn't mean it should be flooded with cold water right when it's working to digest your meal. Too much (cold) water during meals can interfere with natural levels of acid and bile needed in the stomach to properly digest your food.
- Good rule of thumb: Limit drinking cold water 15 min before the meal, during the meal, and about an hour after.
- Unless you have extreme digestive issues, you can still sip on water during the meal. You don't have to be super strict about it!
- If you frequently find yourself thirsty during and after your meals, it may help to drink a glass or two of pure water about 15 to 30 minutes before you eat. This can prevent the urge to drink too much water while your stomach is working to digest your meal.

2. Complete a High Intensity Strength Training Workout or Leg Workout

- Why? Because it utilizes more muscle groups (than say just an abs workout) or larger muscles like the legs. So you'll burn more calories.
- Choose strength training over cardio so you'll burn calories throughout the day, not just till you hop off the treadmill.
- The food you'll be eating will help assist recovery for what muscles you just broke down.

3. Eat A High Protein Breakfast

- 15-30 grams of protein; this is going to boost your metabolism first thing in the morning instead of it being sluggish.
- Important for post workout - muscles need good quality protein for muscle recovery.
- Want something before you work out? Have something small containing some carbs for energy and a little bit of fat to help sustain the energy through your workout.
- You don't want to go all morning with no breakfast or even mid-morning snack and go into the Thanksgiving feast starving. A recipe for overeating for sure!

4. Bring a Healthy Dish

- If you know there's not going to be a lot of healthy options, bring a healthy dish. So you know there's at least something you can have.
- It's like your insurance policy

5. Don't Nibble Throughout the Day

- People typically congregate in the kitchen while other guests arrive and food is usually around at our finger tips.
- Most times we grab things because we are starving (didn't eat anything before you came), out of social habits, or gives them something to do while they wait.
- Then you have your big meal. Then you go into desserts.
- After dessert, people usually hang out, sit around, watch football. And after like an hour, we start munching again on things sitting around.
- You MUST give your digestive system rest.
- Be consciously aware of this tendency to nibble/munch/graze!

6. **Take Digestive Enzymes Right Before the Meal**

- Helps the digestion of fats, carbs, protein, dairy and more.
- Greatly helps with nutrient absorption. It's not "You are what you eat" it's "You are what you absorb".
- Alleviates occasional gas and bloating
- Take 1 or 2 capsules of Digestive Enzymes just before you sit down to eat or with the meal. (Most people don't need to take any with light meals or snacks unless their digestion is very messed up.)
- You don't have to make a scene or feel awkward. If you want, go to the bathroom, take some water with you and do it in private.

7. **Survey the Buffet**

- Before diving head first into the buffet, give it an overlook.
- What items will make a satisfying meal? What indulgences will you allow yourself?
- Depending on your health goals, you can look at this 2 ways:

1. Eat the special stuff: Don't blow your calories on large portions of food you can eat every day. Instead, enjoy small portions of holiday favorites that only come around once a year.

2. Be more health conscious and fill your plate with veggies or a salad and a good portion of protein (turkey, etc,) and then add small portions of other things.

8. **Understand Others Insecurities**

- Understand where the negative comments are coming from with friends/family
- Know that when someone is speaking negatively to you, they may be saying things because they are jealous, bitter, in pain, unhappy, not feeling loved, depressed, etc.
- Learn to not take it personal. It's an issue they have, not you.

9. **Pace Yourself**

- Chew your foods well! Healthy digestion and nutrient absorption begins with the simple act of chewing your food. When you chew your food properly, your body releases digestive enzymes in the stomach that help to break down food so that your body can convert it into energy.
- The longer you chew, the more time it will take you to finish a meal, and research shows that eating slowly can help you to eat less and, ultimately, to avoid weight gain or even lose weight.
- It takes about 20 minutes for your brain to register that you're full.

10. **Don't Make Thanksgiving a 2-Day Feast**

- Leftovers the next day...
- Depending on your health goals, you can look at this 2 ways:

1. Don't overfill your plate. Put a smaller amount of food on your plate and see if you're still hungry after you eat it. You should feel "content" not "stuffed full".

2. Be more health conscious and don't take leftovers home or offer them to others. You enjoyed your day, and move forward. Or take some turkey, mashed potatoes (better options) but leave the leftover rolls and pie behind.