

FAMILY FITNESS FUN

Avoid Stuffing Yourself Like a Turkey This Thanksgiving

While there is plenty to be thankful for this holiday season, we don't want to add extra pounds to the list! Most of us can admit to eating a bit extra during this time of year with family dinners, football viewing parties, etc. The good news is that there are ways to celebrate and honor tradition without being excessive with calories, fat, and sodium.

- Take smaller servings. Many traditional holiday dishes can be very unhealthy. Smaller portions allow us to enjoy the seasonal goodness without calorie overload.
- Pace yourself! Slow down and enjoy every bite of your meal. Did you know that it takes the body about 15 minutes to realize when it has had enough food to be satisfied? By eating slower, we give our bodies a chance to recognize fullness.
- Cook with reduced-fat and reduced-sodium products. If you make traditional green bean casserole, make sure that you select frozen green beans, or the canned variety with no salt added. If canned soup is an ingredient that you use, choose the one with the least amount of fat and sodium. Any dish that calls for shredded cheese can taste just as great with reduced-fat shredded cheese. These substitutions won't mean that our unhealthy dishes will all of a sudden be "good for us", but we want to make small choices for better health whenever we can.
- Have some lighter dishes on the table. If you are hosting, provide a nice green salad and some seasonal vegetables that are prepared in a healthy way. Provide lighter options for dessert also, maybe something featuring fresh fruit. If you're not hosting the meal, you can still contribute something healthy and yummy.
- Drinks count! Provide beverage options with no or few calories. Water is always the perfect choice. It can be offered as-is, or you can flavor it up with slices of lemon, orange, or cucumber. If other drinks are offered (such as tea and soft drinks), you can also provide calorie-free versions of those also.

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Making Memories **BEYOND** The Table

Thanksgiving is just around the corner. For many, this holiday means traditions galore. While the day is typically spent around the table, chowing down on yummy food, let's not forget what the day is really all about: being thankful for all that we have, *including our health*. Socializing and catching up is usually key on this day. So instead of sitting in the living room around the fireplace (okay, so that does sound nice- maybe just sit for a little while) try out some group activities to get everyone moving, talking and laughing:

- Lawn sports are a classic hit. Go outdoors and play a game of football or volleyball. The losers do the dishes!
- Don't want to miss the afternoon football games on TV?? Go outdoors and throw the ball around on commercial breaks.
- Bad weather? Try a game of charades! Acting out and being silly will lighten the mood and help the group connect.
- Go for a Thanksgiving evening walk or bike ride. You're still enjoying time together, only this time, your stomach will thank you when it has more room for that second slice and leftovers.

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"Teaching Thankfulness"

The Thanksgiving season is a great time to "teach" the important character trait of "BEING THANKFUL" (especially to children)! Here are a few ideas on how to do just that!

- **Model** the behavior you want to see! If you show thankfulness, your child will understand more about being thankful.
- Select extra groceries for the needy. If we all give a few cans, it adds up!
- Visit a nursing home or elderly friends.
- Invite people who are away from their families to share a meal.
- Read books about being thankful.
- Encourage children to call relatives just to say, "I love you!"
- Try to NOT STRESS (If you do, children may become stressed too). Instead, make this a special time to enjoy your family!
- Before your holiday dinner, hold hands and have each one share something they are thankful for!

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Let's Talk

Thanksgiving is the beginning of the holiday season. As we prepare for the long awaited feast and festivities with friends and family, we want to remind you to plan early for a more cost effective celebration. Create your holiday menu as early as possible. Substituting a huge turkey for a smaller bird such as a roasted chicken, turkey breast, or a baked ham can also be more economical, especially if you have a small family. Check your pantry for items already on hand so that they can be marked off your list. Early shoppers benefit from holiday specials offered by supermarkets so keep your eyes peeled for bargains. Coupons are always in season, so remember to check your local newspapers for great deals being offered during the holidays.

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Upcoming Dates:

- 11/7: Move to Lose Fitness Challenge- Final Health Screenings @ Extension Office, 2-6pm (drop-in, no apt.)
- 11/9: County C3/ BE MORE Coalition meeting @ Extension Office, 11:30 am- 1pm (RSVP to 731-772-2861)
- 11/16: Nutritious & Delicious @ Haywood Elementary FRC, 1-3pm Open to parents & teachers!
- 11/17: Nutritious & Delicious @ Anderson FRC, 1-3pm Open to parents & teachers!
- 11/23 & 11/24: Extension Office CLOSED in observance of Thanksgiving holiday