

Thanksgiving A quick History...

Often called *Turkey Day* or *T-Day*, Thanksgiving has been an annual tradition in the US since 1863 when President Abraham Lincoln declared that it be celebrated on the last Thursday of every November.

Thanksgiving did not originate in the US. Traditionally it was a custom in Europe to celebrate the end of the harvest season, and to “bulk up” for the winter ahead. The earliest recorded “Thanksgiving” in North America was in 1619 at Berkley Plantation in Virginia. Settlers in Plymouth, Massachusetts did not celebrate Thanksgiving until 1621, when their colonists shared their feast with local Indians.

Over time the Thanksgiving tradition has grown in this country to include family, football, and over-eating! Currently most Americans have a feast usually includes turkey, ham, roast beef, stuffing, gravy, macaroni and cheese, mashed potatoes, corn on the cob, cranberry sauce, apple sauce, apple pie, pumpkin pie, ice cream and whipped cream (to name a few). Historians believe that traditionally the Thanksgiving meal only included:

- Seafood: cod, eel, clams, and lobster
- Wild Fowl: turkey, goose, duck, crane, swan, partridge or eagles.
- Meat: venison or seal.
- Grains: wheat flour or Indian corn
- Vegetables: pumpkin, peas, beans, onions, lettuce, radishes, and carrots.
- Fruits: plums and grapes
- Nuts: walnuts, chestnuts and acorns.



Instead of ...	Choose...
Dark Meat Turkey (6 ounces) Calories 290 Fat 11g	Light meat Turkey (6 ounces) Calories 234 Fat 5g
Mashed Potato (1 Cup) Calories 237 Fat 9g Chol 23mg	Baked Potato (whole small) Calories 156 Fat 3.5g
Stuffing baked in Bird (1/2 Cup) Calories 209 Fat 14g	Baked Stuffing (1/2 Cup) Calories 150 Fat 7g
Make sure to cook your turkey separate from the stuffing! All items that you prepare for the holiday should reach an internal temperature of 165°F	
Use separate cutting boards for raw meats and ready-to-eat foods. Wash your hands and all utensils before and after using them.	

1. **Be Realistic:** Holiday time may not be the best time to try to lose weight. Focus on maintaining your weight. While you should not deprive yourself, use these tips to eat smart!
2. **Don't wait to eat:** Skipping meals to eat a huge feast is not a good idea. Instead, eat smaller meals so you avoid over-eating at events.
3. **Be discriminating:** Eat small portions of the food you love. Just because it is available does not mean you have to eat it!
4. **Police your plate:** Your eyes may be bigger than your stomach. Eat slowly and try to go up only once for items that may be higher in fat and calories. Fill your plate with low calorie vegetables and salads.
5. **Sneak in calorie savers:** If you are preparing meals this season make healthy choices for you and your guests. Bake your stuffing, use low fat dairy, use low fat butter alternatives, and low-fat dressings.
6. **Burn it off:** Go for an extra walk with your family around the block. Use a little extra down time for light jogging or stretching.
7. **Talk it up:** Fill your mouth with conversation, and use your time to catch up with relatives and friends. Don't talk with your mouth full!
8. **Create options:** A nice mix of low fat healthy sides along with the traditional foods leaves healthy options for you, your family and friends.
9. **Volunteer:** Offer to bring a side dish and make it a healthy option.
10. **Remember why you are there:** Have fun and enjoy the holidays.

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