



Kitchen Coach

BY SARAH MIRKIN, RD



Happy Thanksgiving Everyone!

Thanksgiving dinner can actually be a healthy weight loss meal. The trick is making the right choices and portion control.

A word from your Dietitian...

*Holiday season is upon! It's a time of celebration to enjoy friends and family. Unfortunately many people approach the season with dread because celebration tends to revolve around food. They are fearful all of their weight loss efforts will be lost. Others will give themselves a free pass and make it their resolution for 2016 to lose weight. Most EXPECT to gain weight over the holiday season. And most do! **The average American gains 5 pounds over the holiday season.** So how can you avoid this?*

*The best advice I can give you is to change your mind set! Don't expect to lose weight between Thanksgiving and New Years but don't throw in the towel either. Instead, focus on not gaining weight. For success, stay active with regular exercise and a healthy diet. Allow yourself small splurges on foods that make your holiday season meaningful. Cut back in other ways. Your dietitian can help you with specifics.
Cheers!*



Thanksgiving Healthy Plate

Let's start with Turkey breast and veggies! I've never been to a Thanksgiving dinner where both weren't plentiful. Skinless turkey breast is even leaner than chicken breast, so dig in! If the gravy is skimmed of fat than a little will barely contribute to your calorie intake. Cranberries are a healthy choice too as long as they aren't the canned sweet sauce that is loaded with sugar. The protein from the turkey, combined with fiber from vegetables, is a great start to take the edge off.

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Eat slowly and savor the food and your surroundings. Remember Thanksgiving really is about being with friends and family. Make that the most important part of the holiday rather than the food. It's fine to have small portions of your favorite high fat dishes but it will be much easier to keep the portion in check if you follow my first advice and start off with the lighter fare.

So what about pie? Many of my clients think they need to avoid it completely to stay on track over the holidays. A small portion is okay if you really enjoy it! Otherwise, why waste the calories? The best option is pumpkin pie. It's about half the calories of pecan pie and a good source of vitamin A and fiber. If you skip the crust it's a healthy dessert! My last tip for Thanksgiving... Eat until you feel satisfied not stuffed! You will be much happier with yourself later.



Did you know that butternut squash has half the calories of a yam but packs the same fiber, carotene and vitamin C?

Make the swap this year with this simple recipe below...



Simply Delicious Butternut Squash

Ingredients

2 medium butternut squash, halved lengthwise and seeded
4 teaspoons butter
4 teaspoons brown sugar

Salt and pepper

Directions

Preheat oven to 400 degrees F.

Place butternut squash halves on a large baking sheet flesh side up. Place 1 teaspoon butter in the middle of each squash. Sprinkle brown sugar over each squash. Season with salt and black pepper. Roast 25 minutes, until flesh is fork-tender.

Read more at: <http://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/robin-miller/roasted-butternut-squash-recipe/index.html?oc=linkback>



Tips to Avoid Unwanted Weight Gain this Holiday Season

At The Mall...

Shop till you Drop! When you're shopping for gifts, burn calories by parking far from the entrance of the shopping center, taking the stairs, and walking briskly from store to store.

Don't go hungry. Avoid the high fat temptations in the food court by steering clear of it! Have a healthy meal or mini-meal before you run out the door and pack portable snacks like string cheese and an apple or a 200 calorie pack of nuts.

Rule the Food Court. Stick to healthy choices like grilled chicken salads, sandwiches on whole grain bread piled with veggies and lean meat or a veggie patty. Pair them with a fruit salad.



Travel Wisely...

Make it a point to get a workout in before you hit the road or catch a flight if you're traveling this holiday season. You never know what type of obstacles you might run into.

Pack for success! If you're on the road pack a cooler with healthy snacks like Greek yogurt, veggies, low fat cottage cheese, fruits and lean deli meats. When you're flying pack portable foods like sandwiches on whole grain breads with nut butter

or lean deli meat, or whole grain crackers with pouches of tuna fish or salmon, string cheese with raw veggies, or nuts and fruits.



Party Time...

Don't Starve Yourself Before the Party. Make sure to keep your blood sugars even with small frequent meals high in fiber and protein throughout the day. Many people make the mistake of skipping meals the day of a big holiday party, thinking they will "save up" for the main event. Don't go to the event famished. This will backfire and set you up to overeat! Spoil your appetite and have a healthy snack before you head out.

Fill up on Lighter Fare First. At a buffet dinner, rather than filling your plate with your favorite high calorie dish, start with lighter fare such as vegetables, salads and lean protein like shrimp cocktail or turkey breast meat. This will help you take the edge off. Then enjoy, and savor small portions of your favorite dishes!

Spend your Calories like Money. You wouldn't spend a lot of money on something that you didn't love. If you're eating a high calorie dish that is mediocre put your fork down. It's not worth your calories! It's okay to splurge in moderation but make sure it's worth it!

Keep Temptation at a Distance. At a party try to stand as far from the food table as you can. If the



food is out of sight and hard to reach you will be much less likely to be mindlessly munching!

Drink with Caution. Alcohol is an appetite stimulant, especially on an empty stomach. Both alcoholic and non-alcoholic drinks add empty calories that do not satisfy the appetite. Drinks like eggnog and punches can have a whopping 500 calories a cup! Try to stick with calorie free or low call drinks like water, wine spritzers, or light beer and sip slowly with your meal.

4. Rest up! Studies that correlate lack of sleep with obesity, heart disease, and diabetes are piling up! Make sure to get your 8 hours of shut eye this holiday season.

5. Be a Body in Motion. It can be tough to stay active with so many family obligations over the holidays, but don't let exercise slide. Squeeze it in any time you can. If you can't make it to the gym squeeze in a 10-20 minute workout when you wake up with an exercise video, or go for a brisk walk. Make exercise a priority! Get the whole family involved by suggesting a walk after dinner, or an afternoon of flying kites or whiffle ball at a park. Be as active as you can be!

Try this wonderful recipe for a sweet indulgence on a cold night....

Wintery Day Delight Done Light!

Believe it or not this indulgent winter treat is rich in protein, calcium, and antioxidants!



Most coffee shop hot cocoa blends are calorie bombs filled with 500 calories +. Make your own 170-calorie hot chocolate and home.

Simply heat 1 cup of nonfat milk in a saucepan until barely simmering.
Add ½ ounce of chopped semi-sweet chocolate (1/2 inch square) and a pinch of salt, and stir until combined.
Mix in ¼ teaspoon of honey.
Top with a Tbsp of light whipping cream
Savor and Enjoy!