Enjoy Life.

WellNotes

NOVEMBER 2026 INFORMATION FOR KEEPING HEALTHY



THE Y-AXIS



Stop Blaming the Turkey for Your Food Coma

Dozed off after Thanksgiving dinner? Don't blame the bird.



Turkey does contain tryptophan, an amino acid linked to sleep.

But it doesn't have much more than chicken or other poultry.[4] You'll also find tryptophan in eggs, cheese, milk, fish, and nuts.

So what's really behind the post-feast slump?



Experts point to all the carbs and sugar on your plate. Think stuffing, rolls, sweet potato casserole, and pie.

Want to stay awake for the big game?

Fill half your plate with veggies and skip seconds. And let the turkey off the hook.

COMMENTS?

Send comments to the editor:

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Pass the Turkey: How Your Friends Shape Your Health

Healthy habits spread in good company

"These are my Thanksgiving pants!"

On *Friends*, Joey vows to eat an entire turkey by himself. To make room, he changes into a pair of stretchy maternity pants.

It's one of the show's classic holiday moments. Year after year, the gang crowded into Monica's apartment for turkey, football, and plenty of drama.



Those get-togethers did more than fill their plates. The people you spend time with can shape your health, too.

Healthy habits are contagious

According to the U.S. Surgeon General, you're far more likely to be physically active when your friends exercise.[1]

Smokers are also more likely to quit when the people around them quit. Healthy habits rub off, and so do unhealthy ones.

FRIENDS ▶

Spill the Beans: This Chili Staple Is Good for Your Heart

Add more beans to your plate this season

"The trick is to undercook the onions." That's Kevin's secret to his famous chili on *The Office*.



He's up the night before cooking it, then carries a giant pot into work. And spills the whole thing on the office carpet.



Kevin's chili didn't make it to lunch. But yours can. And this season, load it up with beans.

Why beans? Beans are packed with fiber and protein, a combo that helps you feel full longer.

They're also good for your heart. A review of 20 studies found that eating beans, peas, lentils, or chickpeas

BEANS ▶

7 Ways to Stay Active When Old Man Winter Arrives

Aim for 30 minutes of physical activity most days

"Winter is coming." It's the famous warning from Game of Thrones, where winters can last for years and bring bitter cold, empty food stores, and an army of icy zombies.



Your winter won't be that grim. But shorter days and colder weather can make it tempting to put exercise on hold until spring.



5 exercises for better health
https://tinyurl.com/y9g3fnlg

And that's a problem. Fewer than half of U.S. adults, about 47 percent, get the recommended amount of aerobic exercise, according to the CDC. And activity tends to dip in winter, while time spent sitting goes up.[2]

Cold weather doesn't have to put your workouts on ice.

If it's just chilly, bundle up and head outside. Wear layers you can peel off as you warm up, plus a hat, gloves, and a jacket that blocks wind and rain.

Bitter cold, snow, ice, or a tropical downpour? Take your workout indoors. Here's how:

1. **Take** a brisk walk through a mall or big-box store.
2. **Swim** laps at an indoor pool.
3. **Head** to the gym.
4. **Play** an active game with your kids, like hide-and-seek or freeze tag.
5. **Follow along** with an exercise video in your living room.
6. **Take** a class like yoga, spin, or kickboxing.
7. **Walk,** jog, or run on a treadmill. Or hop on a stationary bike.

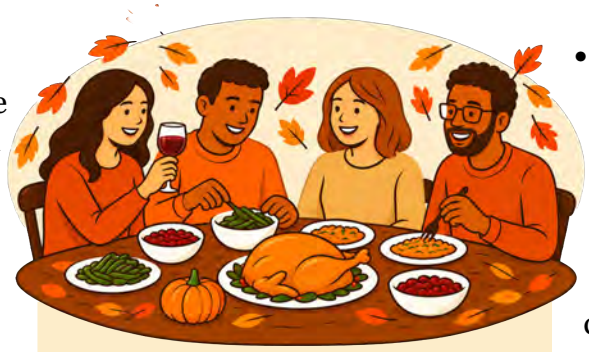


Your goal: Aim for at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week, whatever the weather.

Winter is coming. Your workouts don't have to go into hibernation.

▶ **FRIENDS**

Spending too much time alone has a cost, too. A lack of social connection is linked to a 29 percent higher risk of heart disease and a 32 percent higher risk of stroke.



Discover the benefits of healthy friendships
https://tinyurl.com/4zpaukjb

Want a healthier holiday season?

Make it a group effort. Here's how:

- **Start a new tradition.** Take a walk or toss a football around after the big meal.
- **Bring a healthy dish.** Share a favorite veggie side or a lighter dessert.
- **Team up on a goal.** Ask a friend to walk or work out with you each week, and check in on each other's progress.
- **Reach out.** Invite a co-worker, neighbor, or friend who might spend the holiday alone.

Surround yourself with people who bring out your healthiest habits. Thanksgiving pants are optional this year.

Recipe: Slow Cooker Black Bean Chili with Turkey



Hungry for a healthy and easy meal? Put those turkey leftovers to good use. This chili cooks itself in the slow cooker while you're away.[5] Mix all the ingredients together, add it to the slow cooker, and enjoy.

Ingredients

4 C cooked turkey, chopped
2 (15-ounce) cans low-sodium black beans, drained & rinsed
1 (28-ounce) can low-sodium diced tomatoes, undrained
2 (15-ounce) cans low-sodium tomato sauce
1 C frozen whole-kernel corn
1 T ground cumin
1 T chili powder
2 tsp dried oregano, crumbled
2 tsp ground coriander
4 garlic cloves, minced
1/2 tsp crushed red pepper flakes

Directions

1. In a large bowl, stir together all the ingredients.

2. Add the mixture to a 3½- to 4-quart slow cooker.

3. Cook, covered, on low for 2 to 3 hours, or until heated through.

Serves 6. About 400 calories per serving.

▶ BEANS

6 benefits of beans
https://tinyurl.com/4n4sptre

improved cholesterol levels in most studies. Many studies also found improvements in blood pressure and body composition.[3]

The benefits showed up when people ate about 150 grams a day. That's a little less than 1 cup of cooked beans.

So make a big pot of bean-packed chili this season. Just watch your step on the way into work.



References

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Ask the Wellness Doctor: Can being grateful actually improve your health?
Health Challenge: Make Meaningful Connections: Build social bonds for better health.