



A lifestyle approach to improving mood and wellbeing

"LET THY FOOD BE THY MEDICINE AND THY MEDICINE BE THY FOOD."

HIPPOCRATES



Avoid the Post-Meal Crash This Thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is a time for gathering with loved ones and enjoying a meal in gratitude with one another. It may involve old family recipes handed down through generations, or it may involve trying new recipes to add a modern flair to old traditions. Whatever kind of meal you enjoy on Thanksgiving, you may find yourself feeling bloated, tired or edgy afterwards. There are several reasons for

this, including the kinds of foods we tend to eat during the holidays, and the amounts of them — which can be more than twice what we would normally eat in one sitting! Continue reading for more information about how our bodies respond to foods rich in calories, fats and carbohydrates, and for some tips on how to enjoy your Thanksgiving meal without the unpleasant after-effects!

Size (of the meal) Matters.



When we eat a large meal, our stomachs must expand to handle the extra content. This can lead to feelings of physical discomfort. Then the body begins to digest the foods, and those high in starches get converted into glucose (sugar), leading to spikes and eventual drops in glucose levels. This can lead to an initial energy boost, followed by a mood and energy “crash” and feelings of bloating, heartburn and even headaches. Cholesterol markers, blood pressure and fluid retention may also increase as your body processes fats and salt. Keeping the size of your meal in check can go a long way toward avoiding these problems.

Avoid the sugar rush (and crash).

The sugar high is all fun and games until the resulting “crash” affects the quality of your (holi)day. The term refers to a sudden drop in energy levels after consuming large amounts of carbohydrates (especially simple carbohydrates, such as desserts). Although the human body needs sugar, it also needs the amount of sugar to remain at a consistent level. When the body has more sugar than it’s used to, it rapidly produces insulin in an attempt to keep the levels consistent. This causes blood glucose to decrease, resulting in a sudden drop in energy levels. This is known as hypoglycemia (a.k.a. a sugar crash). Common symptoms include fatigue, irritability, anxiety, difficulty concentrating, shakiness. For people with diabetes, the symptoms can be more severe such as loss of consciousness, seizure or coma. <https://news.sanfordhealth.org/healthy-living/sugar-crash-effects/>



5 tips for a Healthier Thanksgiving

- 1. Eat breakfast** When you skip meals, by the time dinner rolls around, you’re so hungry that you end up overeating and feeling uncomfortable.
- 2. Stay Hydrated** Water will help flush out excess sodium from your body and alleviate bloating. Drinking enough water can also help you feel more alert and energized.
- 3. Try a Healthy New Recipe** Adding a big salad or veggie-filled soup is another way to broaden the nutrient profile of your selections.
- 4. Slow Down and Savor** Just by eating slower, you’ll consume fewer calories.
- 5. Start an Active Family Tradition** When the Thanksgiving feast is over, adding a walk to your family tradition can be a great way to close out the holiday. <https://www.verywellfit.com/how-to-have-a-healthier-thanksgiving-3495509>



The Food and Thought Program works to promote awareness and provide short term counselling around the important link between nutrition and emotional health. For more information or for a referral to the program, please contact the Food and Thought Program at 781-599-0110.

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