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Low-fat Thanksgiving Suggestions

When it comes to Thanksgiving dinners, many people gorge themselves on huge portions and then return a few hours later for leftovers. With many Americans torn between nutritional concerns and their appetite for a celebration, Tri-County Health Department dietitians have some suggestions that can help create a memorable event without adding any unnecessary calories or guilt.

“When it comes to nutrition and weight control, eating can be challenging at the Thanksgiving meal. However, turkey is very nutritious and also low-fat if you don’t eat the skin, so it is one of the best choices available,” says Anne Bennett, Director of Nutrition at Tri-County. “The key is to fill your plate with many healthy side dishes and enjoy smaller portions of desserts.”

Healthy Thanksgiving side dishes include vegetables, salads, cranberries and fruits. Cooks can cut calories by skipping rich sauces, serving smaller portions of gravy on the potatoes and making the stuffing with lower-fat ingredients. Family and guests can enjoy the festivities and have no idea that they are really eating a healthy meal.

For dessert, pumpkin pie with a low-fat dessert topping is a better choice than high-calorie pecan or apple pie. If desserts are your weakness, indulge with a sliver and then send the remainder home with your guests.

Thanksgiving leftovers don’t have to be a problem either. Simple solutions include removing the fatty skin from the turkey and using low-fat or no-fat mayonnaise on sandwiches.

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