

TURKEY COMA, TRUTH OR FICTION?

While it is true that tryptophan makes people drowsy, turkey doesn't contain enough of it to be the cause of post-feast sleepiness. There is enough energy-producing protein and iron in turkey to negate any effects of tryptophan. The real reason people feel sleepy after Thanksgiving is because of overeating. Blood in the body travels to the digestive system to help process all of the food that has just been consumed, which takes blood away from the brain and other extremities.



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Thanksgiving is traditionally a day of indulgence - and indigestion - but the news isn't all bad. Many Thanksgiving dishes are packed with nutrients that keep our bodies running smoothly. So don't feel guilty about going back for seconds.

Salt and pepper

A tiny bit of salt helps with nerve impulses and muscle functions, but people don't need more than a pinch. Using other types of seasoning can help eliminate the use of too much salt. Black pepper has anti-inflammatory, antioxidant



Pumpkin pie

Pumpkin is a great source of vitamin A, which is good for vision, the immune system, and normal growth.



Mashed potatoes

Potatoes are a great source of vitamin C, and also contain more potassium than bananas. Potassium aids with nerve function, muscle control and blood pressure.

Butter

Butter is a huge part of Thanksgiving cooking, and it isn't all bad. Fat in butter helps cells absorb nutrients, and help the brain to transmit signals. A little bit of cholesterol is healthy too, as it is an important component of hormones and also helps the body process vitamin D.



Stuffing

Sage is typically a key ingredient in stuffing, and it provides vitamin K, which is good for healthy bones and the production of blood plasma. Studies have shown that sage may prevent Alzheimer's disease. Recipes that use quinoa or whole-grain ingredients, instead of corn bread, boost the fiber and iron content. Add in chopped celery and mushrooms for more vitamin K and D.



Turkey

Proteins in turkey give your body energy and help repair muscle tissue. While light meat has fewer calories, dark meat is a greater source of iron. Iron is involved with oxygen being delivered to the lungs, and also helps with energy level.



Sweet potato casserole

Sweet potatoes provide a large amount of vitamin A. Cinnamon provides the body with manganese, which aids with things like bone strength, blood sugar, thyroid function, and healthy nerves.



Gravy

Gravy made from chicken broth can provide calcium, which is transferred from the chicken bones, for maintaining strong bones.



Green bean casserole

Green beans provide magnesium, which is good for bone development and normal body functions. Magnesium can also reduce the risks of certain illnesses like cardiovascular disease and type 2 diabetes.



Cranberry sauce

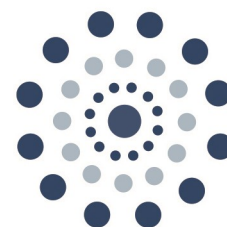
Vitamin C, an important antioxidant found in cranberries, also aids the immune system. Cranberries are also known for helping with urinary tract infections by preventing E. coli from sticking to your insides.

Elena Lacey/Orange County Register

Sources: Office of Dietary Supplements, National Institutes of Health; U.S. Department of Health & Human Services; Dr. Anuradha Prakash and the students in the Chapman University Food Science Program; U.S. Department of Agriculture; Evelyn Tribolo, registered dietitian

Nutrition Notes: November 2016

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