

Five Ways to Recover Faster From Your Thanksgiving Binge

Hack Your Feast

Overeating and overdrinking on Turkey Day are inevitable. Here are a few tips that will make indulging—and recovering—easier.



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Every Thanksgiving, you'll read lots of advice about how to stick to your diet while everyone around you is feasting. People look for that kind of advice because they already know deep in their hearts that there is no chance they will stick to their diets, and some people start feeling guilty about it in advance. Here you'll find five science-backed tips to help you feel better faster the day after Thanksgiving.

Look, I know full well that you probably won't eat perfectly on Thanksgiving. Don't worry about it—enjoy the day. But know this: What you do on Thanksgiving is what determines how quickly you recover the day after.

1. Easy With the Willpower

Researchers have finally proven that we only have so much willpower each day. You can run out of willpower if you waste it saying no to your favorite foods. That means you are destined to fail if you try to simply will yourself away from the food. When you run out of energy, you will cave-in to Aunt Mary's pumpkin pie.

Allowing yourself to choose to eat more eliminates most of the energy you waste on resisting food, so you can use it to make higher quality (and extra large!) food choices instead of eating whatever is in front of you after your willpower fails.

2. Eat the Best Stuff First

That means you should plan ahead. If you are going to eat things you normally don't, and more of them, figure out the foods that satisfy you most and eat those first. Here's the surprising good news: the foods with the most healthy fats and proteins will satisfy you more quickly and lead to fewer insatiable cravings. Vegetables are good for you but they do not satisfy. Think more guacamole, less carrot sticks.

Go for the most delicious foods that have other benefits for you. We like to imagine that red wine is healthy because it has 44 mg of polyphenols per glass. Compared with a cup of [Bulletproof Coffee](#), or 1.4 oz of dark chocolate, wine is about 20 times weaker. Coffee and dark chocolate both have 1000 mg of polyphenols per serving.

Who wouldn't want dark chocolate and fresh brewed coffee on Thanksgiving?

3. Focus on the Fat

No, this does not mean avoiding fat. It means choosing to eat higher amounts of the types of fat that turn off food cravings. That means butter, avocados, unheated olive oil, anything made of coconuts, and even egg yolks.

Fried fats, hydrogenated fats, and vegetable oils are going to lead to more cravings and less satisfaction. So skip the fake dairy fluff and go for the real whipped cream.

You're cheating today—why eat bad fat when you cheat? You can have the good stuff and it will make you feel great the next day, instead of weak and tired as your body works to eliminate unnatural oils.

4. Get Hammered

Alcohol is a part of Thanksgiving. We all know that avoiding alcohol, or at least limiting it to only one drink, is best. But this is Thanksgiving, and we are cheating. What few people know is that the type of alcohol you drink has a big impact on how you look and feel the next day. It turns out that unfiltered alcohol, like beer, contains many substances that trigger inflammation, from leftover grain proteins, to mold toxins from the low quality grains used to make beer. This is awful news, but it's true.

Red wine is the second worst from a toxin perspective, sadly. Unfiltered fermented grapes make ochratoxin-A, a neurotoxic, carcinogenic, immunosuppressive compound. It is a known problem in wine. Your body will filter it out, but it comes at a cost to your Thanksgiving recover. The next day, look for dark circles under your eyes, bigger love handles, and a more groggy brain.

Instead, go for [distilled, filtered spirits](#). The cleanest is potato vodka, but any of the unsweetened high quality spirits like whiskey, tequila, or bourbon are going to taste great and leave you feeling stronger the next day.

For extra bio-hacker credit, take a vitamin C capsule or a vitamin called glutathione to help your liver metabolize the alcohol without making you feel bad the next day.

5. Move

One strategy on Thanksgiving day is to work out an hour or two before Thanksgiving dinner. That way, your muscles will be primed to take advantage of all the food you are going to eat. Your blood sugar levels will be more stable, and you will feel better the next day.

But it's Thanksgiving! Most people are not going to work out. Even a simple walk with family before or after you eat will help to move oxygen into your tissues and to pump cellular waste products out through your body's lymphatic system. You won't burn enough calories to matter with a walk, but the other changes to the way your body functions will help you feel better the next day.