

The case for seconds!

The upside to devouring that piled-high plate at Thanksgiving?
Most of the food is actually *good* for you.

Dig in to Turkey Day's hidden health benefits and enjoy
the best meal of the year even more. BY LESLIE GOLDMAN



TURKEY

There's plenty of reason to gobble up turkey, especially as we head into cold and flu season. "It's a lean protein with all the essential amino acids you need to keep up the immune system," says Wendy Bazilian, DrPH, coauthor of *The SuperFoodsRx Diet*. As with most poultry, the skinless white meat tends to be the lowest in calories and saturated fat, but be sure to grab a thigh, too: Dark meat has twice the iron of white, and four times the vitamin B12, crucial for a good metabolism.

PUMPKIN PIE

One slice delivers four grams of fiber—as much as four prunes, but so much tastier. The antioxidants in pumpkin are also known to boost dull complexions and impart a sun-kissed glow—without the anti-aging effects of the sun.

CRANBERRY SAUCE

A review of more than 150 studies has found that cranberries contain oodles of flavonoids and other "bioactive compounds"—in other words, stuff that is *seriously* good for you. The nutrient-dense berries can help protect against infection, cardiovascular disease and inflammation. The side is typically low in calories, too: A single serving clocks in around 100. Berry nice, indeed.

GREEN BEAN CASSEROLE

Those unassuming green beans are actually a nutritional powerhouse, loaded with vitamin K (for bone health) fiber (for digestion), manganese (for brain health) and folate (for energy). Even better: Their antioxidant levels *increase* after certain methods of cooking—including baking. Just make sure Grandma starts her famous casserole with fresh beans, not canned.



STUFFING

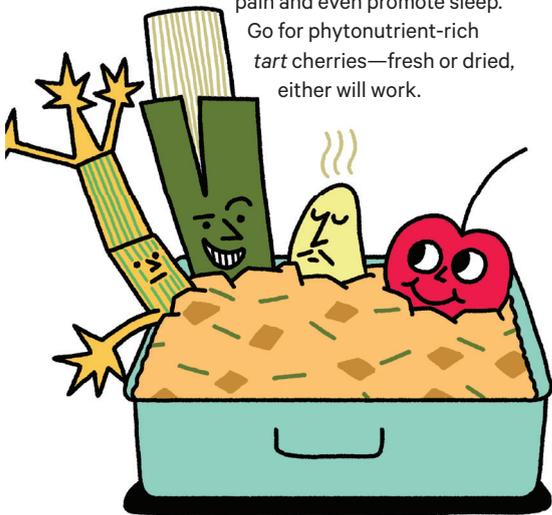
Stale white bread soaked in (delicious) turkey fat might not get a nutritional gold star, but throw in these ingredients and it becomes a health food! Well, almost.

GARLIC Chopping, mincing or smashing fresh garlic releases a compound believed to have cancer-fighting properties. Cooking can dilute those levels, but let your prepped garlic sit for 10 minutes before heating and it can counteract some of that effect.

LEEKs Like their onion and garlic siblings, leeks contain prebiotics—food for the friendly bacteria in your belly—that help you absorb calcium and keep you, um, regular.

CELERY You thought celery was just roughage? Think again! Munching on the green stuff daily can lower blood pressure, thanks to phytochemicals that may help boost blood flow.

TART CHERRIES The antioxidants responsible for cherries' ruby color have been shown to help lower cholesterol, ease muscle and joint pain and even promote sleep. Go for phytonutrient-rich tart cherries—fresh or dried, either will work.



A GLASS OF RED WINE

It's good for you. No, it's not. Yes, it is. Researchers go back and forth on the benefits of moderate red-wine consumption (that's one to two glasses per day), but here's the latest: Red wine has powerful antioxidants shown to do everything from cutting heart-disease risk to protecting against cancer. A recent *Journal of Nutritional Biochemistry* study even found that a nightly glass may help overweight people burn fat better. Score! Just don't drink alone: Experts agree that enjoying wine with company—like friends and family on Thanksgiving—may extend your life. "The world's longest-living people tend to drink with others," says Dan Buettner, author of *The Blue Zone Solution: Eating and Living Like the World's Healthiest People*. "It may have to do with enhancing social connections and fueling positive emotions." Note: Scrolling down your Facebook feed does *not* count as socializing.



LEFTOVERS

When potatoes are cooked and cooled, they produce a type of fiber called resistant starch, which aids in burning fat while reducing hunger. (Same goes for corn, beans and brown rice, BTW.) Sadly, reheating your leftover mashed potatoes lowers the resistant-starch levels—a little incentive to eat them straight from the fridge!

SWEET POTATOES

Just one cup of these naturally sweet spuds more than fulfills your daily vitamin A need, which, beyond being crucial for healthy vision and bone growth, has some skin-deep benefits that might interest you, according to Dr. Bazilian. "Vitamin A may decrease premature wrinkling, thanks to its ability to help hydrate and repair skin," she says. Pass the sweet potatoes! *Now*.