Healthy appetizers:
Munch on veggies instead of chips or crackers. Carrots, broccoli, sugar snap peas, zucchini, cherry tomatoes, jicama, and other sliced veggies offer lots of nutrition, fiber, fewer calories, and almost no fat compared to other snacks. When it comes to dipping, opt for hummus, salsa or guacamole, and try to skip the ranch or other creamy dressings, unless they are a healthy home-made version.

Make half your plate veggies:
The fall season offers lots of delicious vegetable options besides the traditional mashed potatoes and yams. How about loading up your plate with butternut squash, beets, any type of greens, asparagus, or other veggies?

Go easy on the carbs:
Why fill up on rolls when there are so many other delicious dishes on the table?

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Think small when it comes to sweets: You don’t have to deprive yourself of your favorite treats, just try to eat small portions. Indulge your sweet tooth with a small slice of pumpkin pie or other dessert and eat it very slowly to savor it.

Be mindful of liquid calories: Many people are conscious of the quantity or quality of the food they’re eating yet may not give much thought to how much they’re drinking. Alcoholic drinks and sugar-sweetened beverages provide lots of calories. How about having a “mocktail” instead? Sparkling water with a splash of juice and some lemon or other fruit slices can be very refreshing. Or opt for lower calorie, lower sugar options like dry red wine or distilled liquor rather than beer or mixed drinks.

Whatever you choose to eat or drink, be sure to enjoy it. Guilt only makes things worse and can trigger a downward spiral of overindulgence. Instead re-commit to getting back on track as soon as possible.
It can be easy to get wrapped up in the food on Thanksgiving rather than focusing on what we’re thankful for. In fact, gratitude is a great practice to have all year. Here are some of the proven scientific benefits:

**Gratitude improves psychological health** by reducing toxic emotions and depression, while increasing happiness.

**Gratitude improves physical health.** Studies show that grateful people are more likely to take care of themselves.

**Gratitude enhances relationships** because people who practice it have been shown to have more empathy and sensitivity toward others.

**Gratitude enhances sleep.** Making a gratitude list before bed can help you sleep better and longer.

**Gratitude increases self-esteem** by reducing comparisons and appreciating others.

Cultivating gratitude is simple and quick. Take a few minutes every morning or evening to write down three things you’re grateful for. The benefits are worth it!

Tempted to skip your workouts during the busy, stressful holiday season? Think again! Putting exercise on pause until after the holidays may not be a good idea.

**Weight gain:** We tend to eat more during the holidays, so if you are overindulging and not exercising, that can easily result in extra pounds. Exercise will help burn calories, maintain muscle mass and increase metabolism.

**Stress:** The holidays tend to add more to our plates, and not just in terms of food. Shopping, a more hectic schedule, and financial worries can contribute to stress and anxiety. Exercise will help reduce it.

**Seasonal depression:** Shorter days with less sunlight can make some people feel sad. Exercise can lift mood, especially if it’s done outdoors to increase exposure to sunlight.

**Structure:** Maintaining an exercise routine provides structure to your day, which can help maintain other important habits like sleep and healthy food choices.

If necessary, do shorter or fewer workouts instead of letting your routine go completely by the wayside. Maintaining the momentum is much easier than having to reestablish it later.
These roasted veggies are perfect for a Thanksgiving side dish or for a weekly meal prep. Best of all, they are super simple to make, delicious, and packed with nutrients.

**Ingredients:**
- 1 large sweet potato, peeled and cubed
- 1/2 lb. butternut squash, peeled and cubed
- 10 baby potatoes, sliced in half
- 1/2 lb. green beans
- 3 medium carrots, peeled and halved
- 8 oz. package of Baby Bella mushrooms
- 1/2 red onion, cut into wedges
- 1 head of garlic, peeled
- 2 tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp. balsamic vinegar
- 2 tbsp. Italian seasoning
- Fresh Thyme, to taste
- Salt and pepper, to taste

**Directions:**
1. Preheat oven to 425 degrees F.
2. Place all ingredients on a large baking sheet.
3. Toss well to coat all the veggies with the oil, vinegar, and spices.
4. Bake for 40-45 minutes or until tender, but still crisp, not mushy.

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