

# Healthy Thanksgiving Tips

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## Tips on How You and Your Kids Can Be Healthy This Thanksgiving

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The Thanksgiving holiday season is a wonderful time of the year filled with family, friends and of course, food. While the spirit of Thanksgiving is to give thanks for all that we have, the holiday has become increasingly focused on food and eating. There's no harm in enjoying a meal with your family on Thanksgiving, but it's important to remember that the purpose of the holiday is not simply to over-eat.

Childhood obesity continues to be a threatening epidemic in Georgia. Children's Healthcare of Atlanta is continuing to see cases of obesity at all three of its hospitals. The consequences of obesity on children include health issues that are typically seen only in adults, such as Type 2 diabetes, hypertension, sleep apnea, joint problems and high cholesterol. Strong4Life aims to help families take small steps that add up to big changes to help prevent or reverse the consequences of obesity.

Thankfully, there are a lot of ways you can make this Thanksgiving a healthier one for the whole family. Strong4Life helps families bring together four essential building blocks every kid needs to be healthy – Eat Right, Be Active, Get Support and Have Fun. You don't have to take a break from trying to be healthy just because it's the holidays; instead, try incorporating one or two of the tips below into your family's holiday routine:

### Eat Right

- Try to incorporate more whole fruits and vegetables into your Thanksgiving meal; you'll save on the calories that are often added to fruits and vegetables to make heavy casseroles.
- Serve water with sliced lemon or lime with your Thanksgiving meal instead of sugary beverages like lemonade, alcohol and sweet tea. You'll get more flavor with less sugar and calories.

### Be Active

- Leading up to Thanksgiving, encourage your family to spend one less hour in front of the television and one more hour of physical activity per day to help offset the extra calories consumed on Thanksgiving Day.
- On Thanksgiving Day, consider leaving the T.V. and computers off all day so your family will have more opportunities to be active.

### Get Support

- Sometimes, overindulging at the holidays can lead to eating unhealthy all of the time. Try to recognize when your family's holiday eating has become an unhealthy habit and work together as a family to make better choices.

- If you are concerned about childhood obesity, talk to your healthcare provider about more steps your family can take to lead a healthier lifestyle.

#### Have Fun

- Play a game of touch football, Frisbee or kickball after the Thanksgiving meal to help everyone feel energized rather than lethargic.
- Promote "play time" and encourage activities that are fun and physical such as hopscotch, jumping rope, tag or hide-and-go-seek.

Remember that parents serve as role models for their children, so make sure your actions are ones that you would want your children to follow. By making a few simple changes, your whole family can enjoy a healthy and happy Thanksgiving!

#### **About Tips Provider:**

Children's Healthcare of Atlanta, a not-for-profit organization, is dedicated to making kids better today and healthier tomorrow. Our specialized care helps children get better faster and live healthier lives. Managing more than 850,000 patient visits annually at three hospitals and 24 neighborhood locations, Children's is the largest healthcare provider for children in Georgia and one of the largest pediatric clinical care providers in the country. Children's offers access to more than 60 pediatric specialties and programs and is ranked among the top children's hospitals in the country by U.S. News & World Report. With generous philanthropic and volunteer support, Children's has impacted the lives of children in Georgia, the United States and throughout the world. Visit [www.choa.org](http://www.choa.org) for more information.

