



## Nutrition Tips

# Holiday Turkey

### Salt Free and Easy Roast Turkey

- Heat oven to 350 degrees.
- Season cavity with 1 roughly chopped onion, 1 lemon, 3 ribs of celery.
- Tie legs together with kitchen twine. Place turkey on top of a sheet of heavy-duty aluminum foil.
- Top with another sheet of foil of equal size. Crimp edges tightly to seal.
- Transfer sealed turkey to roasting pan fitted with a rack and put in oven.
- A 12 pound bird will take about 2 ½ hours, check a cookbook for other roasting times.
- Make Turkey Seasoning , see recipe.
- Remove top sheet of foil from turkey and raise oven temperature to 500 degrees, cook, basting with herb butter/oil every 5 minutes, until browned.
- Use a thermometer inserted into a thigh (without touching bone) and when it reads 165-170 degrees, (about 30 minutes more), remove bird from oven.
- Let rest for at least 20 minutes before carving. 12 pound bird serves 8.

As Thanksgiving approaches, let's talk a little turkey. Turkey is usually the centerpiece of most Thanksgiving tables, and, it is an excellent, relatively inexpensive protein and a great supply of leftovers.

But how healthy is it really?

It depends upon what type of turkey you buy. Many turkey manufacturers inject salt water (saline) into turkey to make it freeze well. This added salt and water which also helps to make the bird juicier when it cooks. Fresh turkey naturally contains only about 70 mg of sodium per 4 oz serving. A salt water injected turkey has about 300-500 mg of sodium per 4oz serving! That's a quarter of a day's intake, just in the turkey!

Not all turkeys have added salt and most fresh, natural birds are a healthier buy. It's also likely that these birds are grown under more 'natural' conditions. They are a better price than you might guess. When you buy a saline injected turkey it looks like you are paying less per pound than the cost of a fresh, natural bird. But the water the injected birds have in them is heavy, so you are paying the same price per pound for the water as the turkey. This is another reason processors have turned to enhanced turkeys, they make money on salt water.

Ask your local grocery store butcher if they carry turkeys that are not sodium enhanced, enriched, or injected, and have them point them out to you. Labels can be confusing. Start checking prices now so you can budget for a natural turkey. Ask the butcher



Consider the size of turkey that you need. Bigger birds are actually a better buy, since the ratio of bone to meat is lower. In other words, you are getting more protein for your dollar. But, if you don't have a big oven, or don't want a huge amount of leftovers, it may be better to buy a smaller turkey, or just a turkey breast or thigh rather than a whole

bird.

To keep your bird moist and flavorful, without all that added salt, try wrapping your bird in foil, and using the turkey seasoning blend below. The foil will keep it moist. Whatever size bird you buy, don't forget to use the carcass to make a wonderfully flavored turkey soup, which will be ten times lower in sodium than any soup you can buy!

### **Turkey Seasoning**

- 5 teaspoon marjoram
- 2 teaspoon celery seed
- 5 teaspoon sage
- 2 teaspoon pepper
- 3 teaspoon thyme
- 2 teaspoon onion powder



### **Turkey Barley Soup**

- One turkey carcass
- 14-16 cups cold water
- 2 cups barley or brown rice
- 4 large celery stalks, sliced

- 8 large carrots, peeled, sliced
- 3 onions, chopped
- 4 teaspoon dried thyme or 1 bunch fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon dried sage or 1 bunch fresh sage

Fill large pot with water. Set on stove and start to heat. Strip off any meat clinging to the carcass; set aside. Break up the carcass to fit in the pot. Bring to a boil. Once boiling, remove the carcass. Strain broth through a colander to remove any bone fragments. Return to stove, add remaining turkey meat. Wash and prepare the veggies. When the stock comes to a boil, add all remaining ingredients and turn heat down to a lightly bubbling simmer for about 2 hours, stirring every once in a while. The brown rice will cook more quickly than the barley, keep an eye on it, don't cook it too long. If you have leftover tender vegetables to add, like broccoli, green peppers or spinach, add them the last half hour. Your family is tired of turkey, portion this great soup out into smaller containers and freeze for a quick low sodium lunch or cheery dinner during the long dark winter months.