



Thanksgiving Game Plan

Thanksgiving is meant to be a day of gratitude, joy, and connection, not guilt or restriction. You've been working hard on building consistency, nourishing your body, and showing up for yourself everyday. This one day is an opportunity to live out what balance truly looks like.

When we approach this day intentionally it can actually become a tool for your body's metabolism, recovery, and mindset.

YOUR NON-NEGOTIABLES

These are simple, powerful habits that will help you feel good, digest well, and stay aligned while still enjoying every bit of your Thanksgiving meal.

1. Hydration Comes First Goal: 80–100 oz minimum (more if you're drinking alcohol).

Why it matters:

- Water helps **flush excess sodium**, reducing post-meal bloating.
- It supports **digestion and liver function**, both of which are working overtime on big meal days.
- Dehydration often feels like hunger, which can lead to unnecessary grazing.
- Drinking before meals can also help with portion control and stable energy.

Pro tip:

- Start your day with 20–30 oz before coffee or breakfast.
- Keep a large water bottle nearby throughout the day.
- Alternate one glass of water for every alcoholic drink.

2. Eat a Protein-Rich Breakfast (DO NOT SKIP)

When you don't eat in the morning, your **blood sugar drops**, your **cravings spike**, and your body overcompensates later which makes it harder to stay mindful during the main meal.



Why a high-protein breakfast matters:

- Stabilizes blood sugar for the rest of the day.
- Helps control cravings and hunger.
- Keeps metabolism active.
- Reduces overeating later.

Example meals:

- 2–3 eggs + turkey sausage + fruit.
- Protein smoothie (protein powder, collagen, almond butter, frozen berries).
- Greek yogurt parfait with nuts and chia seeds.

If you normally work out in the morning, keep that routine

3. Go for a Walk After Your Largest Meal Why it matters:

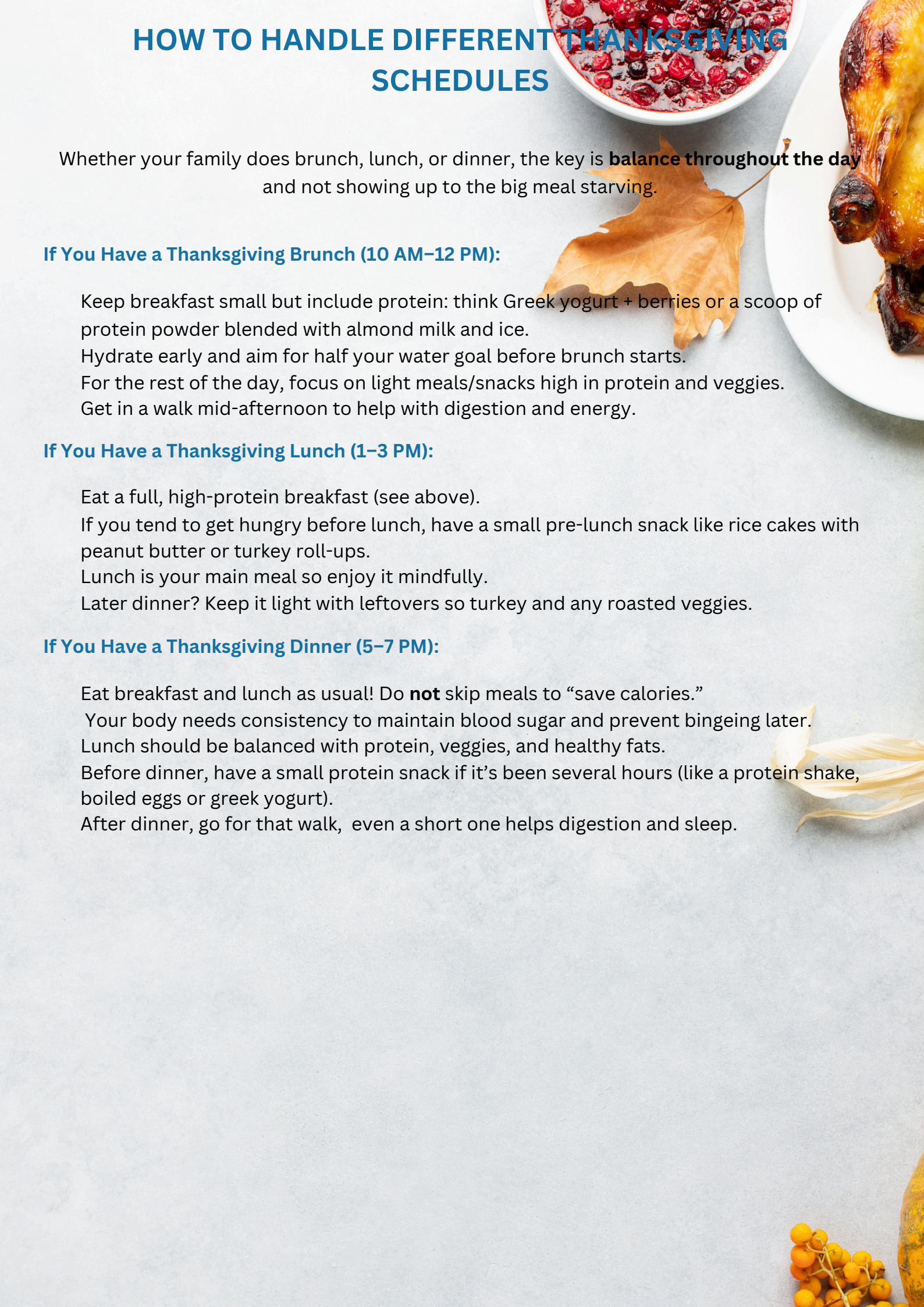
- A post-meal walk improves **glucose control** by helping muscles use blood sugar more efficiently.
- Reduces that sluggish, “food coma” feeling.
- Enhances digestion and reduces bloating.
- Boosts mood and helps regulate stress hormones after a big meal.

Goal:

- 15–20 minutes at an easy pace after your main meal. Even walking the neighborhood with family, the dog, or kids counts because it’s not about intensity, it’s about the movement.



HOW TO HANDLE DIFFERENT THANKSGIVING SCHEDULES



Whether your family does brunch, lunch, or dinner, the key is **balance throughout the day** and not showing up to the big meal starving.

If You Have a Thanksgiving Brunch (10 AM–12 PM):

Keep breakfast small but include protein: think Greek yogurt + berries or a scoop of protein powder blended with almond milk and ice.

Hydrate early and aim for half your water goal before brunch starts.

For the rest of the day, focus on light meals/snacks high in protein and veggies.

Get in a walk mid-afternoon to help with digestion and energy.

If You Have a Thanksgiving Lunch (1–3 PM):

Eat a full, high-protein breakfast (see above).

If you tend to get hungry before lunch, have a small pre-lunch snack like rice cakes with peanut butter or turkey roll-ups.

Lunch is your main meal so enjoy it mindfully.

Later dinner? Keep it light with leftovers so turkey and any roasted veggies.

If You Have a Thanksgiving Dinner (5–7 PM):

Eat breakfast and lunch as usual! Do **not** skip meals to “save calories.”

Your body needs consistency to maintain blood sugar and prevent bingeing later.

Lunch should be balanced with protein, veggies, and healthy fats.

Before dinner, have a small protein snack if it’s been several hours (like a protein shake, boiled eggs or greek yogurt).

After dinner, go for that walk, even a short one helps digestion and sleep.

NAVIGATING ALCOHOL WISELY

You can enjoy a drink or two and still stay aligned with your goals because the key is moderation and hydration.

Tips:

Hydrate between each drink (1 glass water per drink).

Choose lower-sugar options:

Dry wine, light beer, vodka soda, or tequila + soda water + lime.

Avoid sweet cocktails or high-calorie mixers.

Try to stop drinking 2–3 hours before bed because alcohol disrupts deep sleep and recovery.

Don't drink on an empty stomach and try have protein first to help with hunger.

MINDSET MATTERS MOST

Thanksgiving can bring up food guilt or anxiety, especially for those who have dieted for years. Let's shift the mindset:

1. Food is not “good” or “bad.”

It's fuel, and it's part of connection and culture. One meal does not erase your progress, consistency does.

2. Don't “make up for it” the next day by skipping meals.

This slows metabolism and confuses hunger cues. Instead, get back to your normal rhythm and training schedule.

3. Be present and practice gratitude.

Enjoy your family, laughter, and memories. Lowering stress hormones like cortisol actually helps your digestion and metabolism work better!

4. No scale the morning after.

That bump in weight is water and glycogen, not fat. Between the extra sodium and carbs, you may see 2–5 lbs of temporary weight gain. That is just your body holding water, food weight and energy storage.



HOW TO USE THANKSGIVING AS A “BONUS DAY”

When done strategically, this day can actually **benefit** your body.

Here's why ↴

The Science:

A higher-carb, higher-calorie day/meal increases **glycogen stores**. (the stored form of carbs in muscles).

This sends a positive signal to your metabolism, telling it that you're not in starvation mode.

It can boost hormones like **leptin and thyroid**, which regulate hunger and energy.

It helps your muscles perform better in the next few days and may even break through plateaus.

So rather than seeing Thanksgiving as a “cheat,” think of it as a **strategic BONUS**— refueling your metabolism and resetting your mindset.

THE DAY AFTER: TURN THAT FUEL INTO FIRE

Here's where we turn your Thanksgiving meal into momentum.

Plan for a higher-intensity workout the next day — A Leg Day or Full Body workout is perfect for this because it uses the larger muscle groups.

Why it works:

After a big meal, your glycogen stores (muscle energy) are fully replenished.

You'll have more power, strength, and endurance.

Training your legs or doing a full-body workout utilizes this extra fuel for growth and fat burn.

You'll sweat out extra sodium and shed some of the temporary water weight from the day before.



HOW TO RESET THE DAY AFTER

1. Hydrate (Hit your water goal of 80-100oz)
2. Get in your strengworkout — even if it's just 30 minutes.
3. Eat your normal plan and don't restrict.
4. Keep your steps high and on track
5. Get back into your regular sleep schedule.

FINAL TAKEAWAY

Thanksgiving is not a “pause” in your progress. It's part of your journey and one that teaches you how to live in balance, honor your goals, and still be fully present in life.

You're not starting over on Friday. You're continuing forward...stronger, refueled, and ready to crush it.

Your Challenge for Black Friday:

- ✓ Hit your water goal.
- ✓ Get your step goal in.
- ✓ Enjoy your meal guilt-free.
- ✓ Show up strong in your post-Thanksgiving workout.
- ✓ Reflect on gratitude, for your body and your progress.

Your body will recalibrate faster than you think!! As long as you **get right back to consistency.**

