Enjoy Thanksgiving on Your GLP-1 Journey

HOLIDAY GUIDE

A companion to our GLP-1 Thanksgiving Meal Plan: 10 tips, 4 easy sides, and 7 appetizer and leftover recipes

Thanksgiving is about gratitude, family and good food, and you can enjoy all three on a GLP-1. Your medication slows how fast your stomach empties, so a holiday-sized plate can leave you uncomfortable for hours. This guide pairs with our GLP-1 Thanksgiving Meal Plan, which covers the main menu. Here you will find 10 simple strategies, a few lighter sides, starters for the afternoon, and protein-forward ways to use your leftovers.

What's inside

1. 10 holiday tips for GLP-1 patients
2. 4 easy sides that are not in the meal plan
3. 3 appetizers for the afternoon
4. 4 recipes made with leftovers

Looking for the main menu? Our GLP-1 Thanksgiving Meal Plan has eight lighter versions of the classics: turkey, mashed potatoes, green bean casserole, candied yams, stuffing, gravy, dinner rolls and pecan pie. Download it free at **pnwmedicalgroup.com/patient-information-materials**.

10 holiday tips for GLP-1 patients

1 **Master your portions**

The most important adjustment on a GLP-1 is a smaller plate. Plan on about half your usual portion, then pause and check your hunger. Fill half your plate with non-starchy vegetables, one quarter with lean protein, and one quarter with a healthy carbohydrate. You can always go back for more if you are truly hungry. Overeating on a GLP-1 usually leads to nausea and regret.

2 **Put protein first**

Make protein the star of your plate. Choose turkey breast, chicken breast or another lean protein, about 3 to 4 ounces per serving. Protein keeps you full, helps protect your muscle while you lose weight, and digests slowly. Aim for 25 to 30 grams at each meal and at least 100 grams across the day.

3 **Load up on non-starchy vegetables**

Brussels sprouts, green beans, broccoli, cauliflower and salad greens are low in calories and high in fiber, and they are gentler on your stomach than heavy, creamy dishes. Roasted vegetables are a great swap for buttery casseroles, and the fiber helps prevent constipation.

4 **Go easy on fat**

Fat slows digestion, and your medication already slows it. Together they make nausea, reflux and that overly full feeling much more likely. Skip heavy cream sauces, buttery mashed potatoes and fried dishes. Choose roasted, grilled or steamed foods, and keep added fats like dressing to a small amount.

5 **Stay hydrated all day**

Dehydration makes nausea, headaches and constipation worse. Aim for at least half your body weight (lbs) in ounces of water each day, and never less than 80 ounces. A 200-lb patient needs about 100 ounces. Herbal tea and broth-based soups count toward your total. Go easy on caffeine.

6 **Be smart about alcohol**

Alcohol tends to hit harder on a GLP-1 and can make nausea and dehydration worse. If you choose to drink, sip slowly and always with food. Pick a lighter option like a glass of wine or a vodka soda instead of a sugary cocktail, and follow every drink with a full glass of water.

7 **Eat slowly and chew well**

Eating fast overwhelms a slower stomach. Take small bites, chew thoroughly, and set your fork down between bites. Give your meal at least 20 to 30 minutes so your fullness signals have time to catch up. Eating slowly is one of the best ways to feel satisfied on a smaller plate.

8 **Get ahead of constipation**

Aim for 25 to 30 grams of fiber a day from vegetables, fruit, whole grains and beans, and pair it with plenty of water. If food alone is not getting you there, ask our clinic team whether a fiber supplement such as psyllium husk is right for you.

9 **Plan ahead and eat mindfully**

Look at the menu ahead of time and decide which dishes you truly want and which you can skip. During the meal, eat without distractions and check in with your fullness often. If you start to feel too full or queasy, pause, sit upright, breathe and give your body time. Leftovers will still be there tomorrow.

10 **Know when to call us**

If you have severe nausea, vomiting that will not stop, trouble keeping fluids down, or severe constipation over the holiday, call our clinic team right away. We can help adjust your plan so you can enjoy the season comfortably. Keep your regular injection day, too. Skipping a dose to make room for the holiday often brings food noise right back.

4 easy sides that are not in the meal plan

Add one or two of these to the table. Each one is mostly vegetables, so it fills half your plate without weighing you down.

1 **Creamy Cauliflower Mash**

A lighter swap if you want something besides mashed potatoes.

Steam 1 large head of cauliflower florets 8 to 10 minutes until very tender. Drain well, then blend with ¼ cup unsweetened almond milk, 2 tbsp butter, 2 minced garlic cloves, salt and white pepper. Top with chives. Serves 6.

About 70 calories, 3 g protein and 3 g fiber per ½ cup

2 Roasted Brussels Sprouts with Balsamic Glaze

Crispy edges, a little sweet, a little tangy.

Toss 1½ lbs halved Brussels sprouts with 2 tbsp olive oil, garlic, salt and pepper. Roast cut side down at 400°F for 20 to 25 minutes. Simmer 3 tbsp balsamic vinegar with 1 tbsp honey until reduced by half, drizzle on top and finish with 2 tbsp shaved Parmesan. Serves 6.

About 115 calories, 4 g protein and 4 g fiber per ¾ cup

3 Lemon-Garlic Roasted Broccoli

The easiest side on the table, and it holds up well if dinner runs late.

Toss 2 lbs broccoli florets with 2 tbsp olive oil, 3 minced garlic cloves, salt and pepper. Roast at 425°F for 18 to 20 minutes. Finish with lemon zest, a squeeze of lemon and 2 tbsp grated Parmesan. Serves 6.

About 100 calories, 5 g protein and 4 g fiber per cup

4 Fall Harvest Salad

Fresh and crunchy next to all the warm dishes.

For each serving: 2 cups mixed greens, ¼ apple thinly sliced, 1 tbsp crumbled feta, 1 tbsp chopped pecans and 1 tbsp light vinaigrette. Toss just before serving.

About 150 calories, 4 g protein and 3 g fiber per serving

APPETIZERS FOR THE AFTERNOON

Recipe 1: Herb-Stuffed Mushroom Caps

8	15 min	20 min	85	4 g	1.5 g
SERVES	PREP	COOK	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FIBER

Ingredients

- 1 lb button mushrooms, stems removed
- ½ cup cream cheese, softened
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- ¼ cup fresh spinach, finely chopped
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 2 tbsp fresh herbs (parsley, thyme, rosemary), finely chopped
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Olive oil spray

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Clean the mushrooms and remove the stems to make a small cavity.
3. Mix the cream cheese, Parmesan, spinach, garlic, herbs, salt and pepper until blended.
4. Spoon about 1 tablespoon of filling into each cap.
5. Place on a parchment-lined baking sheet, gill side up, and lightly spray with olive oil.
6. Bake 15 to 20 minutes, until the mushrooms are tender and the filling is warm.

Serving tip: Serve before dinner with plenty of water nearby. They can be made ahead and reheated.

Why it works on a GLP-1: A light, savory starter that takes the edge off your hunger without filling you up. Stop at 3 to 4 caps so you have room for the main meal.

Recipe 2: Greek Yogurt Deviled Eggs

12 (2 halves)	15 min	12 min	80	7 g	0 g
SERVES	PREP	COOK	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FIBER

Ingredients

- 12 large eggs
- ⅓ cup plain nonfat Greek yogurt
- 1 tbsp light mayonnaise
- 2 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1 tsp white vinegar or lemon juice
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Paprika and fresh chives

Instructions

1. Place the eggs in a pot and cover with cold water by 1 inch. Bring to a boil.
2. Turn off the heat, cover and let stand 12 minutes. Move to an ice bath for 5 minutes, then peel.
3. Halve the eggs lengthwise and pop the yolks into a bowl.
4. Mash the yolks with the yogurt, mayonnaise, Dijon, vinegar, salt and pepper until smooth.
5. Spoon or pipe the filling into the whites. Dust with paprika and top with chives.

Serving tip: Two halves are one serving. Make them the morning of and keep them chilled until guests arrive.

Why it works on a GLP-1: A classic holiday starter with real protein. Greek yogurt replaces most of the mayonnaise, so you get a creamy filling with less fat.

Recipe 3: Turkey Meatballs with Marinara

4 (3 meatballs)	15 min	25 min	285	29 g	2.5 g
SERVES	PREP	COOK	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FIBER

Ingredients

MEATBALLS

- 1 lb ground turkey (93% lean)
- ⅓ cup almond flour
- 1 egg
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup fresh parsley, chopped
- 2 tbsp fresh basil, chopped
- ¼ cup grated Parmesan
- ½ tsp Italian seasoning
- Salt, pepper and olive oil spray

TO SERVE

- 1½ cups low-sodium marinara
- Fresh basil

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 400°F (200°C).
2. Gently mix all the meatball ingredients until just combined.
3. Form 12 meatballs about 1½ inches wide and place on a lined sheet. Spray lightly with oil.
4. Bake 20 to 25 minutes, until they reach 165°F.
5. Serve with warm marinara for dipping and top with basil.

Serving tip: Three meatballs with sauce make one serving. Put out toothpicks and let guests graze. Add zucchini or bell pepper strips for crunch and fiber.

Why it works on a GLP-1: Real protein to snack on while the turkey roasts, so you are not starving (or grazing on chips) by the time dinner is ready.

MADE WITH LEFTOVERS

Recipe 4: Turkey Broth for Sipping

12 (8 oz each)	10 min	3 hr	40	3 g	0 g
SERVES	PREP	SIMMER	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FIBER

Ingredients

- Turkey bones and leftover turkey meat
- 3 carrots, roughly chopped
- 3 celery stalks, roughly chopped
- 1 large onion, halved
- 4 cloves garlic, smashed
- 2 bay leaves
- Fresh thyme and rosemary sprigs
- 10 whole peppercorns
- Salt to taste
- 4 quarts water

Instructions

1. Put the bones and leftover meat in a large pot, add the water and bring to a boil. Skim off any foam.
2. Lower the heat and add the vegetables, garlic, bay leaves, herbs and peppercorns.
3. Simmer gently 2 to 3 hours, partly covered.
4. Strain, cool and refrigerate. Skim off the fat once it firms up.
5. Keeps 5 days in the refrigerator or 3 months in the freezer.

Serving tip: Warm a mug and sip slowly between meals, especially in the days after Thanksgiving.

Why it works on a GLP-1: Warm broth counts toward your fluid goal, is gentle on your stomach, and is a great way to use up the turkey.

Recipe 5: Turkey and Vegetable Soup

6 (1½ cups)	15 min	30 min	245	29 g	4 g
SERVES	PREP	COOK	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FIBER

Ingredients

- 3 cups chopped cooked turkey breast
- 8 cups turkey broth (recipe above) or low-sodium chicken broth
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 1 onion, diced
- 2 carrots, diced
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 can (15 oz) white beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 cups chopped kale or spinach
- 1 tsp dried thyme, salt and pepper

Instructions

1. Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Cook the onion, carrots and celery 6 to 8 minutes until soft.
2. Add the garlic and cook 1 minute.
3. Add the broth, thyme and beans. Bring to a simmer and cook 15 minutes.
4. Stir in the turkey and kale and simmer 5 minutes more.
5. Season with salt and pepper.

Serving tip: 1½ cups is one serving. Keeps 4 days in the refrigerator or 3 months in the freezer, so lunch is handled well into December.

Why it works on a GLP-1: Warm, filling and gentle on your stomach. The broth counts toward your fluid goal, and the turkey and beans make it a full meal.

Recipe 6: Leftover Turkey Frittata

6 (1 wedge)	10 min	20 min	195	25 g	0.5 g
SERVES	PREP	COOK	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FIBER

Ingredients

- 8 large eggs
- 1 cup liquid egg whites
- 1½ cups chopped cooked turkey breast
- 1 cup fresh spinach
- ½ bell pepper, diced
- ¼ onion, diced
- ⅓ cup grated Parmesan
- Salt, pepper and olive oil spray

Instructions

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Spray a 10-inch oven-safe skillet and cook the onion and pepper 3 to 4 minutes over medium heat. Add the spinach until wilted, then the turkey.
3. Whisk the eggs, egg whites, Parmesan, salt and pepper, and pour over the filling.
4. Cook on the stovetop 2 to 3 minutes, until the edges start to set.
5. Bake 15 to 18 minutes, until the center is set. Cool 5 minutes and cut into 6 wedges.

Serving tip: One wedge with a piece of fruit makes an easy breakfast. Wedges reheat in about 45 seconds.

Why it works on a GLP-1: Starts the day after Thanksgiving with about 25 g of protein, which helps you get back to your routine the next morning.

Recipe 7: Thanksgiving Leftover Protein Bowl

1	5 min	2 min	375	39 g	5 g
SERVES	PREP	COOK	CALORIES	PROTEIN	FIBER

Ingredients

- 4 oz sliced leftover turkey breast
- 1 cup leftover roasted vegetables (Brussels sprouts, broccoli or green beans)
- ¼ cup leftover stuffing
- 2 tbsp turkey gravy
- 2 tbsp cranberry sauce

Instructions

1. Put the vegetables and turkey in a microwave-safe bowl, with the stuffing on the side.
2. Cover and warm 1½ to 2 minutes, until hot.
3. Spoon the gravy over the turkey.
4. Top with the cranberry sauce.

Serving tip: Eat the turkey first, then the vegetables. Use the stuffing and gravy from our Meal Plan for the lightest version.

Why it works on a GLP-1: Protein leads and the rich sides become a garnish, not the main event. You still get every Thanksgiving flavor in one balanced bowl.

Your GLP-1 Thanksgiving, your way

The keys to a great Thanksgiving on a GLP-1 are planning, eating mindfully, and being kind to yourself. Your medication is a powerful tool, and it works best when you work with it.

You can fully enjoy Thanksgiving on a GLP-1. It just looks a little different, and that is perfectly okay. The goal is to feel satisfied, comfortable and truly thankful as you gather with the people you love.

Happy Thanksgiving from all of us at Pacific Northwest Medical Group.

Questions? Talk with our clinic team.
We are here for you through the holidays.

Book your free consultation

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