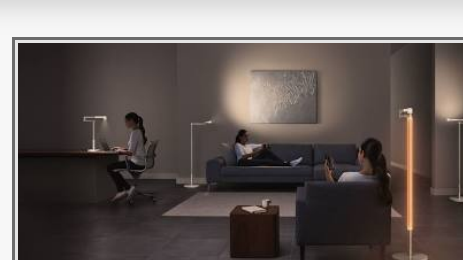



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# Health Benefits of Turkey

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Turkey is a popular source of meat in the United States. In 2019 alone, people in the U.S. ate 5.3 billion pounds of turkey. That works out to about 16.1 pounds per person.

It's also twice as much as people ate just 50 years ago. Since then, scientists have learned a lot about the many good things that turkey can do for your health.

Turkey packs a powerful nutritional punch and it's healthier overall than red meat. Many people choose it as a replacement for beef in recipes.

### Health Benefits

Turkey is a great source of **protein**. The body uses protein to build and repair bones, muscles, cartilage, skin, blood, and tissue. Protein is a macronutrient, which means that your body needs a lot of it. Your body can't store protein, so you need to consume it every day.

As long as you don't eat too much turkey, it is a healthy way to get the protein you need. It's also a good source of beneficial vitamins and minerals like magnesium and niacin.

### Reduced Cancer Risk

Turkey is also an excellent source of selenium. Some studies have shown that a diet rich in the mineral may help to prevent certain kinds of cancer, including:

- Bladder cancer
- Breast cancer
- Lung cancer
- Stomach cancer

Scientists have only seen the protective effects of selenium when it's present in the food you eat. Taking supplements doesn't appear to have the same effect. To learn more, scientists need to do further research.

### Diabetes Management

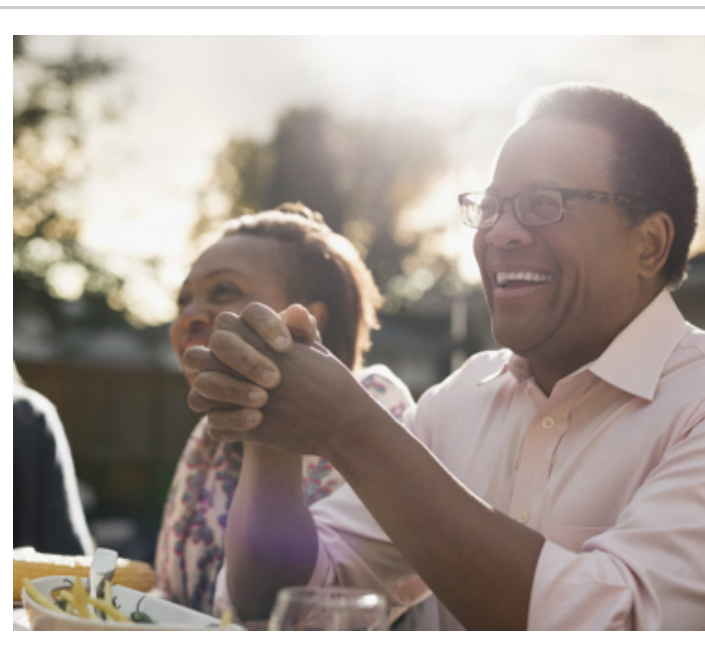
Turkey is a low **glycemic index** (GI) food. That means it won't cause the blood sugar spike that you'd get from more sugar-rich and carb-rich foods. If you have diabetes, including turkey in your diet can help you to keep your blood sugar under control.

### Heart Health

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Low GI foods like turkey can also help increase levels of "good" **HDL cholesterol** in your body. HDL cholesterol travels through the bloodstream and helps to remove "bad" **LDL cholesterol**. LDL cholesterol can damage the walls of your arteries and increase your risk of heart attack and stroke. By eating foods like turkey that boost your HDL cholesterol, you can increase your resistance to these diseases.

### Protection From Cognitive Decline

Turkey and other kinds of poultry are part of the MIND diet. Scientists created the MIND diet to slow the mental decline associated with **Alzheimer's disease** and other causes of dementia. By eating poultry products like turkey at least twice a week as part of the MIND diet, older adults may preserve their memory and thinking skills.

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