



The pill-free secret to adding a decade—or more—onto your lifespan

Why you should give thanks today...and every day

As the Classical Roman statesman Cicero said, "Gratitude is not only the greatest of virtues, but the parent of all the others."

Being grateful leads to an optimistic, positive attitude about life. It allows you to recognize all of the things that came out well in the past...and optimism allows you to believe things *will* come out well in the future.

From a behavioral psychology perspective, good past results are the best predictor of good future results—but the key is recognizing and acknowledging all of the good you presently have. And there's no better time to do that than Thanksgiving.

That's why in the November issues of *Insiders' Cures*, I share the things I'm most thankful for. These are the elements of life that give me reason to wake up with a positive attitude, and they've remained remarkably similar from year to year.

But this year, I'm adding a new item to the list.

Being grateful for a longer life

For my 2019 gratitude list, I'd like to thank researchers from Boston University, Harvard University, and National Center for PTSD (post-traumatic stress disorder), who recently published a very interesting study on how a positive attitude affects longevity.¹

One of the key findings is that men and women who are more

optimistic can actually live 11 to 15 percent longer than their pessimistic counterparts (those who don't believe good things will happen).

And this finding makes perfect sense to me. After all, I'm always telling you that the body and brain need to be viewed as a whole when it comes to good health—not as separate, unconnected entities that don't influence one another.

Eastern medicine has known this for centuries. So it's nice to see Western medicine starting to embrace it as well.

Now, let's take a closer look at this new study, along with some tips for boosting your gratitude quotient—and thus increasing your optimism—every day.

What's your optimism score?

Researchers analyzed two large, long-term studies: The Nurses' Health Study, which has tracked nearly 70,000 women since 1976, and the Veterans Affairs Normative Aging Study, which has observed nearly 1,500 men since 1961.¹

In 2004, the Nurses' Health Study participants completed an optimism assessment. In 1986, the veterans did the same. The assessment asked how much a person agreed or disagreed with statements like the following:

- In uncertain times, I usually expect the best

- It's easy for me to relax
- If something can go wrong for me, it will (Murphy's Law)
- I'm always optimistic about my future
- I enjoy my friends a lot
- It's important for me to keep busy
- I hardly ever expect things to go my way
- I don't get upset too easily

The answers were then tallied to create a personalized "optimism score" for each study participant.

Researchers found that women with

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scores in the top 25 percent for optimism lived 15 percent longer, compared to those in the lowest 25 percent of scores. The most optimistic were also 50 percent more likely to live past age 85.

Plus, men with scores in the top 20 percent for optimism lived 11 percent longer than those in the lowest 20 percent. And they were 70 percent more likely to live to be 85 or older.

Amazingly, factors like chronic diseases, physical activity levels, and diet didn't influence these percentages at all.

Why a positive outlook helps you live longer

The researchers said it's not clear why optimism is associated with longevity, but they do have some theories.

They noted that other research shows that optimistic people may be better able to regulate their emotions and bounce back from stressful situations more quickly. This helps lower the levels of stress hormones in their bodies, which reduces their risk for many chronic diseases.

Optimistic people are also more likely to set goals and feel confident they will reach them. This can include healthy lifestyle goals like regular, moderate exercise and following a balanced diet—both of which contribute to longevity.

Plus, a 2017 study—which also used the optimism assessment above—showed that optimism may actually have a physiological component, reducing inflammation and lowering risk of death from all causes by a whopping 30 percent.²

Specifically, researchers found that people whose optimism scores were in the top 25 percent were:

- 39 percent less likely to die from a stroke
- 38 percent less likely to die from heart disease or respiratory disease
- 16 percent less likely to die from cancer

You can train yourself to be optimistic

This is encouraging news if you're a naturally optimistic person. But what if that sort of positive outlook doesn't come so easily for you?

Well, I have some good news.

The lead researcher on the new study said that optimism is only about 25 percent inherited (meaning it's genetic or a result of your early childhood family environment and circumstances).

In other words, you can choose to “make” yourself optimistic. In fact, there are many other studies suggesting that mental attitudes can be modified or adjusted. And, going back to Cicero's adage, gratitude is fundamental to that.

One of my favorite ways to improve my gratitude and optimism levels is through mindfulness meditation.

For instance, I like to use guided imagery meditation to visualize my best self and a fruitful future. While laying down to sleep, I imagine good things literally raining down from the heavens.

For guidelines on how to easily and effectively add this and other types of meditation to your busy life, please see my book with Don McCown: *New World Mindfulness*. To order a copy today, head over to www.DrMicozzi.com and shop the “Books” tab.

My personal path to gratitude

Each year, I like to share with my readers what makes me thankful. I'm

also going to offer simple suggestions on how you can turn your own thankfulness into optimism... and live a longer life.

I'm thankful for a day of gratitude. There's no time like Thanksgiving to start a gratitude practice.

Try ending your Thanksgiving day by writing down three things you're grateful for—no matter how big or how small. The key is to actually think about and record them. Then, make a vow to do this practice daily. This simple step can help change your outlook and make you a more “naturally” positive and optimistic person.

These gratefulness lists are also particularly important when you're stressed or feeling like you're “striking out,” as they really make a difference for your mental and emotional health.

I'm thankful to spend time with friends and family. Plenty of research shows that feeling isolated or lonely can increase your risk of disease and even shorten your lifespan. So it's important to surround yourself with friends and family. In fact, gathering with loved ones can create positive experiences, which leads me to my next suggestion...

Write those positive experiences down.

After you make your list of three things you're grateful for, follow up with three positive things that happened to you that same day. These may not always come easily to you, but with practice, it will become a habit, and you'll begin looking for positive things throughout each day.

I'm thankful to raise a glass (or two!) to toast my health. There's a reason why so many toasts include

the word “cheers.” Moderate drinking can make you feel good mentally, emotionally, and physically.

In fact, one study found that people who moderately consume alcohol are more likely to live to the age of 85 without dementia or other cognitive impairments, compared to non-drinkers. And perhaps more amazingly, men and women over 85 who consumed moderate amounts of alcohol (two or three drinks per day) were twice as likely to be cognitively healthy compared to non-drinkers.³ (I'll expand on this in December's issue of *Insiders' Cures*—so, as always, stay tuned!)

Once again, researchers used age 85 as a benchmark, showing that optimistic people are many times more likely to live this long. And I don't think that's a coincidence.

I'm thankful for all of the delicious, healthy food we enjoy on Thanksgiving. Turkey is loaded with tryptophan, which helps increase levels of the feel-good chemical serotonin in the brain (for more about the health benefits of this traditional American bird, see page 8). There are also less traditional mood-boosting foods that I like to include in our family's Thanksgiving Day feast. I like to think of it as creating optimism from the inside out...

- **Fish and seafood.** The omega-3 fatty acids in wild-caught fish like salmon, mackerel, and herring have been shown in reams of research to help fight depression. And the selenium in oysters, clams, and crab has been shown to have a positive effect on mood. Plus, oysters make a great ingredient for turkey stuffing!
- **Spinach, other leafy greens, and broccoli.** These vegetables are rich in B vitamins (especially folate) that help your serotonin levels soar. And they make a tasty and healthy

side dish!

- **Blueberries.** I've written before about research showing that these tiny fruits pack a major punch against depression. And I'll showcase their benefits even more next month. But for now, how about a blueberry pie to finish off your Thanksgiving feast?
- **Dark chocolate.** Top off your meal with a rich cup of hot cocoa made from at least 70 percent dark chocolate. As I wrote in the October issue of *Insiders' Cures*, there's plenty of research backing up chocolate's near-mythical mood-enhancing properties.

And last but certainly not least...

I'm thankful for my work, my coworkers, and for you, dear reader. I'm grateful to have the opportunity to use my brain—and my heart—writing to you this month... and every day.

Few things inspire positivity and optimism more than feeling active, useful, and helpful to others. And this can take many forms—working, volunteering, spending time with children, grandchildren, or homeless animals... the list is long.

So this Thanksgiving, think about how you want to stay active and useful in the coming year, and then make a step-by-step action plan to achieve it.

I can't leave here today without thanking each and every one of my readers. I love hearing from you, and I thoroughly enjoy sharing scientific knowledge to help better your life.

So, may you enjoy a happy, optimistic, and healthy holiday with friends and family. And perhaps you'll even share some of these health benefits at the dinner table, over a delicious Thanksgiving feast!

The delicious, tiny fruit that packs a triple threat against aging

Could tart cherry juice be a substitute for the mythical elixir that Juan Ponce de Leon spent all those years searching for?

As you know, Ponce de Leon was convinced there was a fountain of youth somewhere in the area we now know as Florida. But if he had traveled further north, he might have come across tart Montmorency cherries and discovered the very real benefits of their juice for longevity.

And now, researchers at the University of Delaware found that older adults who drank tart cherry juice every day had better brain function and memory. Plus, in a companion study, middle-aged men and women who drank tart cherry juice had significantly reduced blood pressure and insulin resistance.

High blood pressure is a major risk factor for cardiovascular disease—the No. 1 killer of older adults. And insulin resistance is a key risk factor for type II diabetes—another fatal disease associated with aging.

So let's take a closer look at how cherries promote healthy aging for both body and brain.

Cherries offer memory and metabolic benefits

The first study involved 34 men and women, ages 65 to 73. They were randomly assigned to consume either 16 ounces of tart cherry juice or 16 ounces of a placebo drink daily for 12 weeks. Participants drank half in the morning, and half in the evening.

All participants were generally healthy. They weren't taking any medications that influence brain function, and maintained regular diet

and activity levels for the duration of the study.

Researchers assessed numerous cognitive function and memory parameters using a series of standard questionnaires and tests, both before and after the study.

The tart cherry group had the following results:

- 5 percent increase in memory
- 4 percent improvement in visual reaction times and sustained attention
- 23 percent reduction in errors on routine tests of visual memory
- 18 percent reduction in errors on spatial working memory tasks

The second study involved 11 men and women with an average age of 49, with metabolic syndrome. The participants were randomly assigned to consume a single serving of tart cherry capsules, tart cherry juice, or a placebo.

Researchers analyzed participants' blood samples before they consumed the juice or pill, and then up to five hours afterwards.

And here's what they found in the cherry groups:

- Significantly lower insulin levels within one hour
- Significantly lower systolic blood pressure (the top number) within two hours

Tiny cherry packs a big health punch

Researchers believe the beneficial effects of tart cherries may be related to high concentrations of

polyphenols called anthocyanins. These antioxidant and anti-inflammatory plant pigments create the deep ruby red, purple, and blue colors in fruits and vegetables like blueberries, plums, eggplant... and, you guessed it, cherries.

Researchers also noted that the ability of tart cherries to help maintain a healthy blood pressure is key to the circulation of nutrients, energy, and oxygen to the brain, heart, and other organs—helping them function optimally as we age. (I discussed other natural approaches to lowering your blood pressure *without* dangerous drugs in the October's issue of *Insiders' Cures* as well.)

Meaning that like many botanicals, cherries address the *causes* of disease and not just the symptoms. So, unlike drugs, they're good for more than just one medical condition.

The upshot is that tart cherries look like they offer a triple benefit for healthy aging. So don't cut down that cherry tree... and don't hold back on adding cherries to your healthy, balanced diet either.

The popular wild cherry varieties grown today ripen in mid- to late-summer.

So while it may be too late this year to find the fresh fruit, frozen and dried tart cherries are available year round—along with tart cherry juice (though the latter is best used in moderation due to its high sugar content).

I recommend eating at least 20 tart cherries daily. But to get enough of the active ingredients in wild cherries, I also recommend taking 2,000 mg of tart cherry extract.

Spice up your life with this natural memory and mood booster

I've written before about the shocking negligence regarding mainstream medical research on older adults for heart disease, diabetes, and other chronic diseases.

These are the health conditions for which older adults are most at risk, and yet most studies on these diseases don't include people over the age of 50.

But *finally*, the National Institutes of Health is looking into age bias in clinical trials, for example.

And today, I'm pleased to report that a new study on natural approaches for improving cognitive function and mood included plenty of older adults—who need this type of research, and results, the most.

Curcumin's mental effect on people up to age 80

Scientists from Swinburn University in Australia gathered 80 healthy people, ages 50 to 80, and gave them either a placebo or a supplement containing 80 mg of curcumin daily for 12 weeks.¹

At four and eight weeks into the study, researchers measured the participants' cognitive performance, mood, fatigue, cardiovascular function, and various other brain health biomarkers.

After four weeks, the curcumin group had significantly lower fatigue levels than the placebo group—a finding that continued into week 12.

Also at week four, the curcumin group had less tension, anger, confusion, and overall mood disturbance than the placebo group. All of which were erased by the end of the study.

Another key finding is that at 12 weeks, the curcumin group had significant improvements in their memory.

And perhaps most notably, all of these benefits were found across all ages, meaning they were just as significant in 80-year-olds as they were in 50-year-olds.

Curcumin is only one of many memory-improving nutrients

Curcumin is the active ingredient in the herb turmeric. And a growing body of research shows that curcumin has many benefits for brain, heart, and bone and joint health—probably due to its ability to reduce chronic inflammation and balance the immune system.

For this study, researchers found that the pattern of results associated with curcumin consumption was consistent with better brain function in the hippocampus—a key area for memory. And they noted that the improvements were seen in people *without* dementia.

That's important, since quite a few prior studies on “brain” supplements, such as ginkgo, focused only on people already suffering from memory impairment.

But, as I've written before, the science is finally catching up, showing that natural compounds like turmeric, blueberries, and cherries (see page 4) demonstrate short- and long-term memory enhancements in healthy people without dementia.

And, of course, over the past few years, data continues to accumulate showing that curcumin—along with a host of other nutrients and

botanical ingredients—improve and reverse dementia in older people with serious cognitive impairments.

In fact, you can learn all of the natural ways to protect your brain and restore your memory in my *Complete Alzheimer's Cure* protocol. To learn more, or to enroll today, [click here](#) or call 1-866-747-9421 and ask for order code EOVB00.

How to incorporate curcumin into your daily diet

In addition to taking curcumin as a supplement (I recommended 400 to 450 mg per day), you should also use turmeric liberally in hot and cold dishes of all kinds.

Turmeric will generate a healthy golden color in all of the following dishes. (After all, it's not called the “golden spice” of India for nothing!) So go ahead and enjoy any or all of the following Asian recipes from Epicurious.com²:

Dhal. This staple lentil dish is spiced up with chili, garlic, ginger, and turmeric.

Tandoori carrots. This vegetarian dish combines carrots with onions, shallots, and traditional curry spices like cumin and turmeric.

Persian chicken. Sauté chicken with garlic, onions, lime, and turmeric. Serve it with a crisp cucumber and herb salad.

Coconut turkey curry. Give a new twist to traditional lamb curry by browning turkey in a pan and adding coconut, lemongrass, and turmeric.

And speaking of turkey, turmeric gives a unique twist to your Thanksgiving leftovers.

Two of my favorite recipes include:

Turkey salad. Cube turkey and add organic mayo, turmeric, and other spices to taste. Toss in some celery, grapes, and shallots to make it even healthier.

Turkey soup with whole-grain noodles. This variation on grandma's chicken soup can be spiced up for better flavor and health benefits. Try using a lump of fresh, chopped turmeric instead of the dry herb. You can also spice up a turkey matzo

ball soup with cardamom, lime, and turmeric.

Finally, turmeric can give you a whole new taste perspective on traditional dishes, like:

Meatballs. Make curried meatballs with coriander and turmeric, and serve with whole-grain flat bread or pasta.

Pork tenderloin. Turmeric lends itself nicely to this fall favorite. Try coating the tenderloin with a honey-turmeric mixture, and serving it with butternut squash and collard greens.

Seafood. Rub dried turmeric on halibut or other wild-caught white fish before grilling. You can also coat butterflied prawns with turmeric, lemongrass, and hot chili powder (or curry powder), and then grill.

Bottom line: Turmeric has been used as both food and medicine for centuries all around the globe.

And this month is the perfect time to try it out and expand your culinary horizons. So what are you waiting for?

How to preserve healthy, colorful, nutritious foods year-round

Hopefully you're still enjoying the abundance of the Fall harvest this month. But when that finally comes to an end, there's a good way to continue eating healthy, naturally grown foods throughout the winter months.

I'm talking about preserving your own produce—either harvested directly from your garden or purchased from your local farmer's market. That way, you'll avoid a winter full of bottled, canned, or packaged, processed grocery goods loaded with artificial ingredients and chemical preservatives.

In the September 2017 issue of *Insiders' Cures*, I explained how to freeze your summer fruits and vegetables. The key is washing and flash-freezing produce as soon as it's picked.

Clarence Birdseye actually created this technique a century ago at a large factory on the Gloucester, MA Harbor (where I grew up) before being acquired by the C.W. Post Company to form General Foods.

And now, a British study found

that fresh produce can begin losing nutrients within three days of being harvested.

You can also dry herbs and spices: Thoroughly rinse the seeds or leaves, dry, place them in a paper bag, and wait a few weeks until the plants are thoroughly dried out. Then, seal the bag and store it in a cool, dry place until you need it for a recipe!

And, of course, home canning and pickling are time-tested options for prolonging the healthy bounty of the Fall harvest.

Pickling 101

Pickling has regained attention recently, but it's an old tradition and technique. Here's how to do it:

1. Make a basic brine with cider or white vinegar and water. The traditional mixture is equal portions vinegar and water, but you can adjust for taste. You can also add salt or a little sugar to your brine, but I prefer healthier options. Instead of sugar, try using sliced ginger and/or cinnamon sticks. I

also like clove, cardamom pods, and star anise. If you prefer a more savory taste, add bay leaves, celery seeds, chili peppers, dill, mustard seeds, peppercorns, sage, or thyme.

- 2. Simmer your brine for about 10 minutes.** This will dissolve the salt and spices and release the herbs' essential oils.
- 3. Pour the mixture into sterilized jars filled with tightly packed fruits or veggies.** Make sure to leave about half an inch to an inch of empty space below the rim of the jar.
- 4. Seal the jars, put them in the refrigerator, and wait at least 48 hours.** This allows the pickling liquid to finish its work.

And voila! You're left with healthy, natural, pickled produce that can be kept in the refrigerator for up to six months, or frozen for years.

My favorite pickling recipes

Here are a few of my favorite options for healthy, pickled foods...

Beets. Simmer scrubbed beets for 45 minutes, until tender. Cool the beets, peel the skins and roots, and dice them to fit into your jars. Cover with pickling brine, and seal.

Uses: Pickled beets are particularly tasty paired with dairy foods, like cream cheese or plain yogurt. I also like them in a crème fraiche sauce for salmon, herring, or sardines.

Blueberries or blackberries. Make a brine that contains cinnamon,

ginger, and a little salt. Pour the mixture over jars filled with fresh, clean berries, and seal.

Uses: For an elegant holiday appetizer, serve a smorgasbord of pickled berries, cold cuts, and cheese. You can also use the berries as a garnish in cocktails or mineral water, or as a topping for ice cream.

Cranberries. Wash and freeze whole cranberries. Then, drop the frozen fruit right into your pickling

brine as it's cooking. Add spices like cinnamon and ginger, or diced oranges (with the peel), for added sweetness. After 10 minutes of cooking, cool the mixture, pour it into a jar, seal, and wait at least 48 hours.

Uses: Pickled cranberries are great in rice dishes, as a spread for ham or turkey sandwiches, or as a garnish for your holiday meals.

Pearl onions. Peel the onions and sprinkle them liberally with salt. Let

NEWS BRIEF

The secret to gut health may grow on a tree

Back in the 1860s, the Welsh reportedly coined the phrase “an apple a day keeps the doctor away.” Since then, research has shown that Eve’s forbidden fruit can help prevent dementia, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, breast cancer, and obesity.

And now, a new study has found that organic apples contain natural probiotics that nourish your gastrointestinal (GI) microbiome.

As I’ve written before, a healthy microbiome equals a healthy body and brain. Which may have been what the 19th century Welsh folks meant all along.

A closer look at apples’ nutrients

Apples originated on the hillsides in what used to be known as Soviet Central Asia. The area now encompasses several countries like Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, etc.

Early apples looked more like crabapples than the big, round fruits we’re familiar with today. Which may explain why, after Russian apples migrated to Europe and North America, the fruits were primarily used to make apple cider.

But during the 20th century, as water sources became safer to drink, apples began to be cultivated more for taste than for their ability to be made into cider.

So we need to consider whether the old admonition about a daily apple was more about drinking cider than eating the whole fruit.

Either way, apples (especially their skin) have been shown to be rich in antioxidants, flavonoids, fiber, B and

C vitamins, calcium, potassium, and phosphorus—which explains why they lower the risk of so many chronic diseases.

And while a rather tongue-in-cheek 2015 study found that people who ate an apple a day didn’t go to the doctor any less than non-apple eaters, it did reveal that they used fewer prescription medications.¹

Which leads me to a new study...

An apple a day doesn’t keep the probiotic bacteria away

Researchers in Austria analyzed how much probiotic bacteria apples contain, and whether the amount varies between organic and conventional varieties.

The researchers measured the bacteria in apple stems, peels, flesh, seeds, and calyx (the bottom of the apple, where the blossom once appeared). They found that a typical apple—organic or conventional—has about the same amount of probiotic bacteria. Most of the bacteria is in the seeds, but even if you toss out the core, you still get about 10 million bacteria.

The difference, though, is that organic apples have a more balanced, diverse, and evenly distributed population of probiotic bacteria than conventionally grown apples.

Of course, I suspect some of this has to do with pesticides. Organically grown apples (like all organic produce) legally can’t be sprayed with pesticides. These

chemicals are harmful to plants in many ways—including killing their naturally occurring probiotic bacteria.

In other words, when it comes to good health, it’s what’s *on* the apple as well as what’s *in* it.

Researchers also found that organic apples didn’t contain *E. coli* and other bacteria that are known pathogens, but that conventional apples did. And as an added bonus, they discovered that the probiotic bacteria in organic apples help them taste better.

A lable for your microbiome?

Based on their findings, researchers suggested that information about bacteria and microbes be added to food labels.

And I wholeheartedly support this recommendation. It’s consistent with the increasing awareness that foods, spices, nutrients, and botanicals exercise a lot of influence on the body through their effects on the GI microbiome (what I call “biome-availability”).

Researchers also noted that the probiotics on fruits are affected by cooking. Consequently, organic apples and other fruits should be eaten fresh and raw (in contrast to many vegetables, which are better, nutritionally, when cooked).

So when you’re out and about on your daily walk this fall, snag a crisp, organic apple from an overladen tree, or pick up a bushel at your local farmer’s market. After all, it’s just what the doctor ordered for a healthy microbiome.

the mixture sit for one day in a bowl. Then, rinse off the salt and pat the onions dry with a towel. Place them in jars and fill with your favorite pickling brine. They'll be ready to eat in a month and will keep for a year in the fridge.

Uses: Pickled onions brighten up vegetable dishes like broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, peas, and green beans. Or you can drop a pickled onion into your favorite martini (instead of a pickled olive) to add an *umami* taste—and call it a “Gibson.”

Watermelon. Cut the rind into strips,

and soak them for one day in a brine of 3 to 4 ounces of salt in 4 cups of water. Then, take the rind strips out of the brine, rinse, and place them in a pot of fresh water. Boil for 20 minutes. Drain, return the rind to the pot, and fill it with pickling liquid. Simmer for 15 minutes, until the rind becomes translucent. Take the rind out of the pot, cool it, and pack it into jars. Fill the jars with the cooled pickling liquid, and seal.

Uses: Pickled watermelon rind is excellent in Indian dishes like curry and chutney. You can also use it in salads, along with goat cheese.

Cucumbers. When it comes to “*real pickles*”—that is, pickled cucumbers—your biggest decision is whether to cut or slice the cucumbers, or keep them whole. Pickling juices may contain black peppercorns, fresh dill, hot chili peppers, and/or garlic to taste.

Other foods “ripe” for pickling include asparagus, eggs, squash, many fruits, and just about anything permeable you can fit in a jar.

And of course, there are always pickled peppers, which can be picked by the peck...

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NEWS BRIEF

The only type of bird you'll want on your table this Thanksgiving

“Turkey day” is approaching quickly, and you may be debating which version of the bird to serve.

Should you get a fresh or frozen turkey? Does it really matter if it's organic? Are products like turkey “burgers” and turkey “bacon,” jerky, and sausage healthier options than their beef and pork counterparts?

Well, let's take a closer look...

Happy (organic) Thanksgiving

Let's start with your Thanksgiving centerpiece. Even though it's more expensive than the rock-hard, plastic-shrouded, frozen “blobs” in your grocer's freezer section, I always recommend fresh, organic turkey.

As I wrote in the September issue of *Insiders' Cures* (“Cage-free, grass-fed, organic...oh my!”), there are many labels for “healthy” poultry and eggs. But none of them are better than “certified organic.”

By United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) definition, any turkey (or other type of poultry) with the organic label must *only* eat organic feed, and can't be given antibiotics or growth hormones. The birds must also have year-round access to the outdoors, and can't be confined in cages that restrict their movement.¹

Not only is this healthier for the birds, but it's also healthier for you. Plus, unless you eat fresh, organic turkey, chances are you're being exposed to a lot of processed “junk” ingredients.

Bottom line: Organic turkeys are rich in B vitamins, iron, phosphorus, potassium, selenium, and zinc. Yet frozen, processed turkeys are often rich in additives like salt water to “plump” them up.

Not to mention that an organic, fresh turkey is just the right size and taste. Unlike those bloated, “butterball” ice balls, that leave you with abundant unhealthy leftovers. So really, which would you rather have gracing your Thanksgiving table?

Just say no to pseudo-healthy turkey “products”

Of course, holiday celebrations involve more than just Thanksgiving dinner. There are plenty of other meals that friends and family enjoy together throughout the month, from the festive to the mundane. And you may be getting pressure from seriously misinformed friends or relatives to substitute beef or pork with turkey at *every* meal.

But it's a myth that turkey is a “healthier” choice than red meat—

despite the popularity of pseudo-healthy turkey-meat substitutes.

Yes, turkey “bacon,” and other “foods” may have fewer calories and less saturated fat than their beef or pork cousins. But the truth is these products can be highly processed and packed full of unhealthy additives.

For instance:

Turkey bacon typically contains fatty dark meat, skin, and artificial preservatives—as well as added nitrates and vegetable oils.

Turkey sausage may be processed with artificial coloring, preservatives, nitrates, and sugars.

Turkey jerky can be high in added sugars, salt and, in some cases, monosodium glutamate (MSG).

Turkey burgers tend to be healthier, often containing only dark and light turkey and spices for seasoning. But some products have added sugars and processed “flavorings,” meaning you'll need to read the labels carefully.

But why go through that hassle? Stick to fresh, roasted organic turkey. You'll gobble up all of the nutritional goodness—with no nasty added ingredients (or unwanted side effects to your health).