



# Make Turkey Day a veggie day, too, with South Indian recipes

**T**hanksgiving dinner with all the trimmings is anything but trimming.

All too often, the only vegetables accompanying the turkey, stuffing and various pies are marshmallow-topped, butter-infused sweet potato pie and a platter of perfunctory peas.

But instead of subtracting a family favorite, try adding some vegetable side dishes that are heart-healthy and low in calories and fat. Generally, many vegetables are so bland that we tend to plump them up with high-calorie toppings or ingredients that add lots of fat and cholesterol.

"Many of these vegetables are boiled or steamed and served with cheese or butter," says cookbook author Alamelu Vairavan. Her latest book, "Healthy South Indian Cooking," is loaded with recipes for vegetables and includes some ideas for Thanksgiving.

Vairavan says the secret to great-tasting, low-calorie vegetable dishes is spices. Among the most popular Indian spice

## Caramelized Brussels Sprouts

This easy recipe adds a zesty, heart-healthy side dish loaded with vitamins, fiber and antioxidants to your Thanksgiving feast.

1. Put 3 cups (about 12 ounces) Brussels sprouts in a bowl. (If the sprouts are large, cut them in half.) Add 2-3 tablespoons olive oil, 1/2 teaspoon salt, 1/2 teaspoon ground black pepper and 1 teaspoon ground cumin.
2. Toss the sprouts until they are coated with the oil and seasonings.
3. Spread sprouts on a baking sheet, making sure they don't touch.
4. Place in preheated 425-degree oven. Bake for about 40-45 minutes until the sprouts have a darkened, crusty shell and are tender inside.

SERVES 4

SOURCE: "HEALTHY SOUTH INDIAN COOKING"



PHOTO BY JONG KYU KIM

is turmeric, a yellow herb used in curry. Research studies show that turmeric can protect against some cancers and may be useful in treating Alzheimer's. Previous studies have borne out the spice's antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. It also adds flavor without adding calories. Vairavan says try adding the spice to your eggs in the morning for some zing

and color. One easy side dish you may try for Thanksgiving is Vairavan's caramelized Brussels sprouts (see recipe). The sprouts, part of the cruciferous vegetable family, are loaded with fiber and vitamins. Several research studies have shown that their antioxidant properties may protect against strokes and many cancers while slowing down the aging clock. The recipe uses little oil and the cumin provides a tasty layer to the roasted sprouts.

Using a few spices can make veggies the supporting star of any meal. "The food becomes so aromatic and flavorful," Vairavan says. "You will transform any vegetable hater into a vegetable lover."

For more ideas, recipes and a good primer on Indian spices, go to Vairavan's website, [curryonwheels.com/recipes.html](http://curryonwheels.com/recipes.html).

## Let us hear from you

Full-body scan or hands-on pat-down?

Now that you've reached a certain age and your body isn't exactly what it was in your 20s, how do you feel about the airport full-body security scanners? Are you mortified to think about being seen "in the buff" or have the years made you less self-conscious about your body?

Would you prefer the full pat-down by a

same-sex agent to avoid being "on camera"? Or have you decided to give up flying and travel by car instead? Share your thoughts for possible publication. E-mail [act2@newsday.com](mailto:act2@newsday.com) or write to Act 2 Editor, Newsday Newsroom, 235 Pinelawn Rd., Melville, NY 11747.



NEWSDAY FILE PHOTO / BILL DAVIS

A few of Fire Island Lighthouse's steps

## Still stuffed? Walk to burn off Thanksgiving calories

**B**y the time next weekend rolls around, that second helping of turkey and third piece of pumpkin pie will be lingering memories. Unfortunately, they may be lingering on your waistline.

While shopping at the mall can burn off calories, instead of walking around, walk up: The Fire Island Lighthouse holds its annual Thanksgiving Weekend Evening Tower Tour next Saturday at 4 p.m. The 181 steps to the top and subsequent descent will burn about 30 calories, equal to two dollops of whipped cream. Admission is \$15. For reservations, call 631-661-4876.

Experienced hikers can put a bigger dent in accumulated calories with a 12-mile trek on Nov. 28 sponsored by the Walt Whitman Birthplace in Huntington. The free hike loops the Nassau-Suffolk Greenbelt Trail and begins at 8:45 a.m. Call 516-721-0223 for details.



BLOOMBERG NEWS PHOTO

## Part B or not Part B? Here's COBRA answer

**M**edicare Part B, which covers doctors' fees and outpatient costs, comes with a price — a monthly premium. Unlike Medicare Part A, Part B is voluntary. Many who continue working and are covered under an employer's group policy postpone signing up for Part B. Similarly, if you are retired but are covered under your working spouse's group plan, you can decline Part B. Once group coverage ends, you have an eight-month window to sign up for Part B without penalty, which is 10 percent of your monthly premium.

But what if you are over 65 and get coverage through your spouse who is laid off and elects to continue benefits through COBRA? While COBRA can extend benefits for up to 36 months, Consumer Reports notes that the penalty clock starts ticking immediately. In other words, you must sign up for Part B within eight months of your spouse being laid off. If you wait until COBRA ends to sign up, you'll incur the penalty.

## Caps for employer health plans?

**You've written that all employer-sponsored health plans must offer extended benefits for children until age 26. Must they also remove annual and lifetime caps for coverage? Is that effective Jan. 1, 2011, or Jan. 1, 2014?**

**We're being told our plan is trying to fight this new law and get an injunction so they don't have to remove the caps. Can this be done? No**

**one is giving us a straight answer. Where can I turn for information?**

Go to the government's new consumer site, [healthcare.gov](http://healthcare.gov), and click on "Understand the new law." You'll find an explanation of all its provisions, and a timeline (2010 through 2014) showing when each one becomes effective.

All plans must cover children until age 26, eliminate dollar limits on lifetime coverage and submit dollar limits on annual coverage for regulatory approval. Those three requirements are all effective in the first open enrollment period after Sept. 23 this year. Typically, that's Jan. 1, 2011. All plans must eliminate annual dollar limits on

coverage starting Jan. 1, 2014.

New York is not one of the 20 states where the law is being challenged. The legal questions at issue: Can Congress require all Americans to obtain health insurance and prohib-

it insurers from denying coverage to those with pre-existing conditions? These two provisions don't take effect until 2014. They are linked: The elimina-

tion of pre-existing conditions restrictions isn't financially viable unless everyone is insured. In 2014, the law imposes a \$695 annual penalty on people who don't obtain coverage. At the same time, it subsidizes premiums for those who can't otherwise afford it and establishes state insurance exchanges to make coverage universally available.

**The bottom line** The U.S. Supreme Court ultimately will rule on the law's constitutionality. Meanwhile, a lower court injunction staying its implementation is considered extremely unlikely.

**Websites with more information** [bit.ly/b0fw88](http://bit.ly/b0fw88) and [bit.ly/d9Tk8X](http://bit.ly/d9Tk8X)



ASK THE EXPERT

Lynn Brenner

**TO ASK THE EXPERT** Send questions to Ask the Expert / Act 2, Newsday Newsroom, 235 Pinelawn Rd., Melville, NY 11747-4250, or e-mail [act2@newsday.com](mailto:act2@newsday.com). Include your address and phone number. Questions can be answered only in this column. Advice is offered as general guidance. Check with your own advisers for your specific needs.

## Spotting malnutrition in senior loved ones

**A**s you gather for Thanksgiving, you may be enjoying the feast with older loved ones you haven't seen in a while. This is a good time to detect if the seniors at your table are suffering from poor nutrition. The Mayo Clinic passes along these tips:

- A giveaway to nutrition problems is if the clothes your loved one is wearing look too big.
- Do you see signs of bruising or a wound that won't heal? This is often a sign of malnutrition.
- Are they pallid and too thin despite displaying a good appetite? Some prescription and over-the-counter drugs affect nutrient absorption. You may have to talk with your loved one's doctor to see if there are alternatives to their medications.