



The Wellness News

The Importance of Breakfast

Your Morning Meal

We've all heard it before...breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Research backs this concept up, but do you? Eating breakfast has several health benefits, including improved concentration, weight control, improved performance, and much more. Breakfast helps growing children and young adults concentrate in school, perform better on tests, and retain more information. Having a well fueled brain also supports important skills such as creativity and critical thinking. Unfortunately, it is not uncommon for people to start their day without breakfast, or just as bad, load up on a quick, sugar-filled treat like a muffin or pastry. Both options sabotage health and performance, and can make it difficult to maintain a healthy body weight. Feel your best each day by creating healthier morning habits!



Say No to Skipping Breakfast

Eating a nutritious morning meal that includes protein and fiber can help you consume fewer calories throughout the day by keeping blood glucose levels stable. A common misconception is that it is okay to skip your morning meal and "save" those calories for lunch and dinner. Ideally, calories should be eaten throughout the day. People who skip breakfast tend to overeat at other meals, experience cravings for carbohydrates in the afternoon, and feel hungrier in the evening. Fueling up in the morning also helps to kick start your metabolism, which will in turn help your body burn more fat.

What is a "Good" Breakfast?



According to the USDA standards for a healthy diet, each plate of food you consume should be $\frac{1}{2}$ fruits and vegetables, $\frac{1}{4}$ proteins, and $\frac{1}{4}$ starches. Choose from as many food groups as you can, including protein, healthy complex carbohydrates, fruits, vegetables and low-fat dairy. Next, combine them any way you desire. Be creative; there is no wrong recipe when the ingredients are fresh and healthy. Try whole grain cereal topped with strawberries and skim milk. Or perhaps create a yogurt parfait with granola and fruit. Cook some oatmeal and sprinkle it with cinnamon and nuts. Eggs are a great source of protein and omega fatty acids. Make an omelet filled with seasonal chopped veggies for a satisfying start to your day. The possibilities are endless...



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Healthy Breakfast Ideas

Feeling bored with your regular morning routine? Need quick meals on the go? Try these ideas:

- Sauté onion and tomatoes, add scrambled eggs, wrap it up with a whole wheat tortilla and top with salsa.
- Blend together – a banana, an apple, chopped kale leaves, orange or other juices, and ice cubes for a quick grab and go breakfast. Add ground flax seeds for an extra nutritional boost.
- Greek yogurt with fruit and granola
- Whole wheat toast with nut butter and fruit
- Oatmeal – add fresh, frozen, or dried fruit and nuts for a little variety!



USDA & My Plate Recommendations

Not exactly sure how many fruits, vegetables, servings of protein, and carbohydrates to fit into your daily calorie count? Check out these guidelines provided by the USDA and My Plate (based on the average need of an adult):

- Fruit: 2 cups
- Vegetables: 2.5 - 3 cups
- Grains: 6-8 ounce servings (making at least ½ of these whole grain servings)
- Protein: 5-6 ounce servings
- Dairy: 3 cups
- Oils: 5-7 teaspoons (most servings should come from unsaturated fat sources)

For a clear breakdown of each food group and to get your specific recommendations, please visit:

<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/>.

Did you Know?

It takes about 30 days to create a habit. Plan ahead and go grocery shopping early to ensure you have breakfast available. Try this for 30 days to create a new healthy habit.

Resources:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/breakfast/expansion/benefitsbreakfast.pdf>

www.choosemyplate.gov

<http://www.webmd.com/diet/features/many-benefits-breakfast>

Breakfast Made Simple and Healthy

Eating a healthy breakfast that includes high-fiber options can help you lose weight and keep diabetes, heart disease, and stroke at bay, according to studies.

Start the day with healthy cereal

- Check the labels. Your choice should provide at least 6 grams of fiber per serving. Make sure it contains less than 10 grams of sugar
- Add nonfat milk or soy milk for protein.
- Top with bananas, berries, or nuts.

Other nutritious breakfast options

- Mix oatmeal with apples, golden raisins and pecans
- Non-fat vanilla yogurt with granola and fruit
- Banana, peanut butter and whole-grain toast
- Whole-grain bagel with low-fat cream cheese or a slice of melted cheese and tomato
- Whole wheat tortilla with sliced deli turkey or chicken and cheese
- Toast frozen whole-grain waffles and top with 100% fruit preserves or peanut butter and a drizzle of honey
- Low-fat cottage cheese mixed with canned pineapple or defrosted frozen berries. Have half a whole-grain bagel on the side
- Hard-boiled egg and a high-fiber breakfast bar (tip: hard-boiled eggs can be kept in the fridge for 2-3 days)
- Scramble 1 whole egg, 1 egg white, 1/4 cup of shredded low-fat cheese, and your choice of vegetables. Wrap up the scramble in a whole grain tortilla
- Make an open-faced egg sandwich on whole grain toast with sliced tomato and cucumber

Here are a few ingredients to keep at the office for those busy days

At your desk

- granola with nuts and oats
- whole-wheat bagels
- bananas, oranges, apples
- instant oatmeal
- raw, unsalted nuts
- whole-grain breakfast bars

In the fridge

- low-fat cream cheese
- low-fat cottage cheese
- low-fat yogurt
- peanut butter
- fruit for oatmeal or a snack
- hard-boiled eggs



Quiz: Breakfast

1. True or false, skipping breakfast helps you burn fat and lose weight.
 - a. True
 - b. False
2. By skipping breakfast we:
 - a. Boost our metabolism
 - b. Burn more calories
 - c. Decrease fat
 - d. Lose weight
 - e. None of the above
3. MyPlate resources will help you with:
 - a. Serving sizes
 - b. Recipe ideas
 - c. Portion control
 - d. Nutrition information
 - e. All of the above
4. True or False: It takes about 30 days to create a solid habit.
 - a. True
 - b. False
5. At least how much space on your plate should your vegetables take up?
 - a. $\frac{1}{4}$ space on your plate
 - b. $\frac{1}{2}$ of the space on your plate
 - c. None of your plate

Answer Key

1. B
2. E
3. E
4. A
5. B