



Benefit from Breakfast

Whether a child running off to catch the bus, a parent of three, a single business executive, or a retired couple enjoying life after work, breakfast is often overlooked and missing from the daily routine. Millions of Americans regularly skip breakfast. While it is commonly touted as the “most important meal of the day,” breakfast is rarely given the time and attention it deserves.

Most of the hype around eating breakfast has been about the benefits of eating it versus not eating it, including increased energy; better attention, concentration, and memory; improved insulin sensitivity; and lower BMI. Yet, just as important as eating breakfast at all, is the quality of what you are choosing to eat for breakfast. When consuming carbohydrates, select whole grains for the added fiber, and pair it with a protein to enhance the benefits of breakfast. Fiber helps to slow the absorption of glucose from the gut into the bloodstream, slowing the rise of blood sugar. Additionally, fiber takes longer to break down in the gut, helping us feel full longer. Protein increases the uptake of glucose from the bloodstream into our cells, which also assists in controlling blood sugar levels. On top of that, consuming protein at breakfast has been shown to increase metabolism, decrease food cravings throughout the day, and promote weight loss.

September is “better breakfast month,” a perfect time to get your breakfast routine started or fine-tuned. Make time for breakfast. Consider these solutions below to help fit this meal in to your routine.

Breakfast Ideas:

- Whole wheat or corn tortilla wrapped with scrambled egg, shredded cheese, and diced tomato or choice of salsa
- Egg, cheese, and spinach omelet sandwiched between an English muffin
- Whole-wheat toast smeared with avocado and topped with an egg
- English muffin with peanut butter topped with sliced banana
- Toaster waffle with almond butter and apple slices
- Oatmeal topped with a splash of milk, raisins, and chopped walnuts
- Granola and milk topped with sliced peaches and slivered almonds
- Bowl of cottage cheese and a muffin on the side (make muffins in advance, freeze, and thaw the night before for convenience)
- Yogurt layered with granola, seeds, and sliced strawberries
- Cheese stick and a fruit and nut bar or cereal bar
- Smoothie with choice of fruit, greens, Greek yogurt, and splash of orange juice
- Smoothie with banana, peanut butter, almond milk, and dash of cinnamon – add a tablespoon of ground flax seed if desired

Breakfast Tips:

- Make time. Plan some time to prepare and eat breakfast, just like you plan time to brush your teeth in the morning. Wake up 15 minutes early, and if needed, then go to bed 15 minutes early. If you have children, establish a routine for them. If eating on the run is necessary, then prepare foods the night before and avoid highly processed, high sugar, and high salt items. For example, choose a cheese stick and an apple.
- Plan ahead. The night before, consider your morning. Prep your coffee pot with coffee. Set out the toaster. Pre-cut strawberries. You might even consider making a pot of oatmeal ahead and portion out into single servings, so you can just heat a bowl up in the morning and top with your choice of nuts and fruit.
- Choose variety. Avoid getting into a rut of eating the same thing every day. Not only can this lead to boredom and lack of enthusiasm for breakfast, but it can also limit your nutrient intake. More variety equals more nutrients.
- Be creative. Soup for breakfast? Super. Leftover spaghetti for the morning? Why not! Don't let common practice dictate what you eat for your morning meal. Anything can be breakfast. Also, make this meal an opportunity to add more veggies into your day.

Start your day with breakfast and reap the benefits today and days ahead.

Sources

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