

NUTRITION BITES

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CARE MANAGEMENT

Rise and Shine and Eat Breakfast

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“Breakfast is the most important meal of the day.” How many times have we heard this popular saying? This adage does carry merit as research has shown the benefits of eating breakfast. But even with this knowledge, we still give several

reasons for not eating breakfast such as not being hungry in the morning, having nothing to eat in the kitchen as well as not having enough time for a meal before heading out for the day.

Is skipping breakfast really harmful to your health? Here are a few factors you’ll want to consider when thinking of your next breakfast meal.

Breakfast Matters

According to research, a regular breakfast is linked to improved overall health, including better diet quality and weight management and decreased risk for some chronic diseases. Research suggests that breakfast eaters have improved concentration and problem-solving abilities, better attitudes toward work and school, and higher productivity in the late mornings. Athletes and physically active individuals who eat breakfast also experience the benefits of breakfast and have higher endurance levels.

On the flip side, research repeatedly finds that breakfast skippers have an inadequate fruit and vegetable intake, higher consumption of soft drinks, increased tobacco use, less endurance and

decreased physical activity, poor dental health, and lower academic and work performance. Skipping breakfast is also associated with chronic inflammation leading to increased risk for diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and cancer. In addition, studies reveal that breakfast skipping (both occasional and frequent) is associated with depression and restless sleep.

Starting the Day With a Win

Breakfast provides a great start for eating well and a healthy lifestyle. Breakfast leads the way for eating more fruits, vegetables, whole grains and calcium-rich dairy foods. Those who eat a morning meal usually consume more vitamins, minerals and fiber. Whereas those who skip breakfast are more likely to miss out on the key nutrients that a morning meal brings.

More Health Benefits

Research supports that those who eat breakfast are less likely to be overweight and that morning meals help with weight loss and healthy weight maintenance. It is speculated that breakfast plays a role in regulating appetite, hormone levels and the number of calories we burn throughout the day even though the reasons for these results are not exactly clear. It could be that eating breakfast, like being physically active, is a common behavior among those who maintain a healthier weight.

The foods chosen at breakfast may be another factor. Regularly choosing high-fiber cereal topped



with nuts or seeds and milk has been linked to a healthy weight, thanks to the satiety from the meal's fiber and protein. Timing can also be a reason. Compared to skippers, breakfast eaters are less likely to be overly hungry for a midmorning snack or lunch and, therefore, have less impulsive snacking habits or an urge to eat larger portions for lunch. It is important to note that eating breakfast meals that are higher in calories is associated with a higher body mass index (BMI).

Starting the day with a healthy breakfast can benefit your heart, digestion, bone health and blood sugar levels. This could be related to the foods consumed at breakfast such as whole-grain breads and cereals, dairy foods, whole fruits and 100% fruit or vegetable juices. Researchers are finding that breakfast may also help regulate blood glucose, insulin levels and fat metabolism as well as reduce the risk of metabolic syndrome.

What Makes a Good Breakfast

Choose whole foods and avoid processed foods that

have extra sugar and are high in sodium and fat. Aim for 15 to 25 percent of your total calories for the day (based on 2,000 calories), which equates to between 300 and 500 calories. Another great tip is to include foods from at least three different food groups on your breakfast plate.

Examples of quick, simple nutritious breakfasts:

- Hard-cooked egg, high-fiber bran muffin and sliced banana.
- Whole-grain toast slathered with a thick layer of peanut butter and a glass of 100% orange juice.
- Fresh berries topped with Greek yogurt and whole-grain cereal.
- Oatmeal with added walnuts and diced apples topped with a dash of cinnamon.
- Breakfast burrito with scrambled eggs, black beans, salsa and a sprinkling of crumbled feta cheese wrapped in a whole-grain tortilla shell.

Making the time for eating a healthy breakfast puts us on the right track for a better day and healthier life.



Featured Recipe

Scrambled Oat Bowl

For complete recipe and nutrition facts: [Eating Well](#)

Preparation time: **NA**

Total time: **5 minutes**

Servings: **1**



INGREDIENTS

1 peeled banana

¾ cups oats

1 egg

½ cup plus **1 tbsp** plain
Greek yogurt

1 tsp cinnamon

Pinch of salt

¼ cup blueberries

¼ cup sliced strawberries

Sprinkle of shredded coconut

INSTRUCTIONS

1. In a bowl, **add** banana, oats, egg, one tablespoon of yogurt, cinnamon and salt.
2. Use a fork to **mash** the banana to create a batter with an even consistency and then **transfer** it to a heated skillet.
3. **Cook** over medium heat for about five minutes. Use a spatula to **flip** and break up the pieces into a scrambled-egg consistency.
4. **Cook, stirring** frequently, until the scramble is golden brown and chunky like soft granola.
5. Using a cereal bowl, **pour** the remaining yogurt into the bowl and then **divide** the scrambled oats into thirds.
6. **Place** the first third on the yogurt base, **scatter** the blueberries on the first layer, **top** the blueberries with the next third of scrambled oats, **layer** the sliced strawberries next and **add** the final third of scrambled oats.
7. On top, **sprinkle** with shredded coconut and enjoy.

Nutritional Information:

Makes 1 Serving

Calories: 330; Protein: 19.2g; Carbohydrates: 39.5g;

Dietary Fiber: 7.1g; Sugars: 8.2g; Fat: 5.2g; Saturated Fat: 1.6g;

Sodium: 280.3mg

