

# Breakfast - Tips and Simple Creations

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### Why the big fuss about breakfast?

#### Research indicates:

- Skipping breakfast is associated with a higher body mass index and increased obesity risk, even despite lower reported daily energy intake among breakfast skippers.
- Breakfast eaters are less likely to snack on impulse, and tend to eat less at later meals.
- Normal weight individuals and those who have successfully maintained weight loss are likely to eat breakfast regularly. They most commonly consume a breakfast consisting of high-fiber cereal, which contributes an average of 20% of daily energy intake.
- It is important to note that breakfasts that are very high in calories have also been associated with higher body mass index. *In other words, not all breakfasts are created equal.*

#### Breakfast provides a healthy start to the day, and a physical and mental energy boost:

- Serves to jumpstart your metabolism for the day by BREAKING the FAST that your body undergoes overnight.
- Provides an opportunity to fit in important nutrients (think produce!) and set you up for more healthy choices throughout the day.

*A healthy breakfast contains a balance of nutrients, just like any other meal or snack. Think of the Balanced Plate when planning your breakfast, and aim for a balance of 50% non-starchy veggies, 25% lean protein, and 25% carbs. See examples from each plate section below:*

#### Non-starchy Vegetables

- Fresh, frozen, canned, sun-dried, freeze-dried, sautéed, roasted, raw, steamed, non-starchy veggies can be eaten plain on the side, seasoned and mixed into egg or meat-based dishes, or added as condiments to breakfast sandwiches. They key is to make sure they are 50% of your plate.

#### Protein

- Eggs or egg whites: boiled, poached, cooked over-easy to over-hard, scrambled, omelet-style, frittata, quiche
- Meat/Fish: turkey or Canadian bacon, chicken sausage, lunch meat, lean ground meat, lox
  - If you have high blood pressure, be sure to take note of sodium content here
- Plant-based: tofu (mixed in smoothies, casseroles, or scrambled as an egg substitute), tempeh, seitan, dried beans, refried beans, nuts and nut butters, seeds, soy meat substitutes
  - If you have diabetes, be sure to include the carb content of the beans as well

#### Carbs (whole grains, starchy veggies, fruit, dairy)

- **Whole Grains:** breads, English muffins, mini-bagels, tortillas, crackers, pancakes and waffles
- Cold cereals: look for 3 or more grams of protein and fiber and less than 10g of sugar per serving (and stick to the listed serving size!)
- Hot cereals: step aside, cream of wheat! Most whole grains can be eaten as a hot cereal, including oatmeal (try old-fashioned, steel-cut, or Irish-cut), brown rice, barley, buckwheat, farro, quinoa, millet, teff, amaranth, or polenta. Many food companies sell hot cereal mixes with a combination of several whole grains.
- **Fruits:** small apple (4 oz), ¾ cup blueberries, 12 cherries, ½ large banana, ½ grapefruits, 1 cup of raspberries or blackberries
- **Starchy veggies:** ½ cup sweet potato, ½ cup corn, 1 cup winter squash
- **Dairy:** 6 oz (¾ cup) Greek yogurt, low fat or non-fat, 1 cup milk (nonfat cow's milk, unsweetened almond milk, kefir)

Check out the breakfast section of the [Retrofit Jumpstart Recipe Book](#) for a few other easy ideas!

#### Sample QUICK breakfast ideas (mix and match)

- Trail mix / nuts and dried fruit
  - Time saver: make 5 bags at the start of the week, grab and go each morning.
  - Purchase dried fruit without any added sugar.
- Hard boiled eggs plus a whole tomato
  - Time saver: cook & peel eggs on Sunday for the week, or buy pre-boiled eggs.
  - Grab-n-go carb options to add — small apple, 1/2 banana, slice of whole grain bread. (portioned in bags or Tupperware)
- Steel cut oats
  - Time saver: make in a pan or Crockpot on the weekend; reheat single servings.
  - For more balance/satiety: mix in 1-2 Tbsp of peanut butter or almond butter or chopped nuts & fruit, and/or add 1-2 Tbsp of ground flax seed (flax seed meal).
  - Grab a cup of carrot or celery sticks for a side snack with breakfast or later in the morning.
- Corn or whole wheat tortilla with fillings:
  - Savory version: vegetarian refried beans, cheese & 1 cup salsa rolled up and microwaved to heat through.

- Sweet version: roll the tortilla around 1 Tbsp peanut butter and 1 small banana or ½ large banana
- Grab a cup of carrot or celery sticks for a side snack with breakfast or later in the morning.
- Time saver: make several burritos ahead of time, store in refrigerator, and heat as they are used. Pack veggies for the week on Sunday /Monday, in single-serving baggies.
- Cottage cheese or Greek Yogurt and fruit
  - Eat at home or buy any of these in single serving cups and take with you.
- Mashed avocado or spreadable cheese (e.g. laughing cow or baby bell) and whole wheat toast or whole grain crackers
- Top with 1 cup steamed spinach or other non-starchy veggie.
- Scrambled eggs in a mug: top with salsa or add a handful of cherry tomatoes on the side
  - <http://www.incredibleegg.org/recipes/recipe/microwave-coffee-cup-scramble>
- Breakfast bars
  - Nutrition Facts: For 100-220 calorie bars, look for <2g sat fat, >4g protein, >2g fiber, <10g sugar. For 220-350 calorie bars, look for <4g sat fat, >9g protein, >4g fiber, <20g sugar.
    - Barring whole fruit, sugar in any form should not be the first or second ingredient listed.
    - Sample acceptable brands (not all-inclusive): Fiber One, Kashi, Kind, Clif, Lara, Luna, Rickland Orchards, Rise, Soyjoy
  - Grab a cup of carrot or celery sticks for a side snack with breakfast or later in the morning.

**\*\*\*Remember that breakfast doesn't have to consist of typical breakfast foods—it can be veggies and hummus, soup, salad, leftovers... anything you want...keeping the balanced plate in mind!**