

# The Importance of Breakfast

## *Rise, shine and EAT!*

You hit the snooze button one too many times, and now you are rushing to get ready for work. There is no way you have time for breakfast, but that's not a big deal, right? Wrong.

Ever wonder where the term "breakfast" came from? Your body needs to refuel after a long night's sleep – a "break" from your "fast." Skipping breakfast leads to low blood sugar, fatigue, irritability and poor attentiveness.

### Research

Studies have shown that eating a healthy breakfast can lead to better strength and endurance, sharper concentration and better problem-solving abilities. The American Dietetic Association reports that children who eat a morning meal perform better in school. Also, people who eat breakfast generally consume more vitamins, minerals and other healthy nutrients than those who do not eat in the morning.

### Weight Management

Eating breakfast helps to control snacking and binge

eating throughout the day. Typically, when breakfast is skipped, hunger takes control, leading to unwise food choices later in the day – including excessive calorie intake. This applies to children as well; studies have shown kids who skip breakfast are twice as likely to be overweight.

### What is Considered a Healthy Breakfast?

A "balanced" breakfast should include a substantial amount of fiber (which can include fruit or vegetables), low- or non-fat dairy, whole grains and some lean protein. A good breakfast might be a high-fiber fortified cereal with milk, eggs and an apple or orange. This breakfast alone provides the essential vitamins B, C and D, calcium, folic acid, protein and iron.

### Time-Saving Tips

Are you chronically late in the mornings? Then think ahead so you have no excuse for

missing breakfast:

- Make a smoothie with fruit and low-fat yogurt.
- Prepare a hard-boiled egg the night before and grab it on your way out the door, along with a piece of fruit.
- Take your breakfast to work and prepare it there.
- Put a whole wheat bagel in the toaster while you gather your things.
- When you make your lunch for work, consider making breakfast for the next day.
- Why not have dinner for breakfast? If you have leftovers from the day before, it might be a delicious way to start your day!



### Did You Know...?

Some people are not hungry first thing in the morning, but it is still important to refuel. Try to eat something anyway, such as a piece of toast and a grapefruit. Within 2 to 3 weeks, your body will recognize that it needs food in the mornings, and you will have established a healthy pattern.