BREAK THE FAST

The advertisements (and your mother) are correct: breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Eating breakfast helps jumpstart your metabolism by “breaking the fast” and providing your body with ready-access fuel to stoke your metabolic furnace. Metabolism increases in the morning as it burns off calories from breakfast. When you skip breakfast, it takes longer for your metabolism to get pumping. Consequently, you miss out on burning a lot of calories that your body has the ability to burn. Eating breakfast also helps prevent late-day overeating.

Breakfast is one of the easiest meals of the day to prepare. A well-balanced breakfast can be prepared without any cooking skills. All it takes is a little planning ahead.

FUEL YOUR BODY WITH A BETTER BREAKFAST

1. COUNT TO THREE. A healthy breakfast includes full servings from at least 3 food groups: protein (meat or dairy), whole grains and fruits. For example, a bowl of whole-grain cereal, 8-ounces skim milk and a sliced banana is a balanced breakfast. Refine your breakfast menu until you come up with combinations that carry you from breakfast to lunch. Protein will help satisfy your hunger and provide staying power to your morning meal. (A splash of milk on your cereal isn’t enough.)

2. PLAN AHEAD. Come up with three to four different options for a balanced breakfast and rotate from day to day or week to week. Most people do not mind eating the same breakfast a few days in a row. When you wake in the morning, you should not have to stop and think what you’re going to have for breakfast—you should already know. Be sure to plan your food shopping to stock accordingly. Varying breakfast slightly from week to week will help prevent boredom without it becoming overwhelming or a chore.

3. CHOOSE HIGH FIBER. Breakfast cereal provides the best opportunity for getting a concentrated “dose” of fiber into your diet. Many bran or other whole-grain cereals boast 10 to 15 grams of dietary fiber per serving—half of the daily recommendation. At the very least, choose a cereal with at least 5 grams of dietary fiber or toast two slices of whole-wheat bread for a total of 6 grams of fiber. If your favorite cereal is low fiber, boost the fiber content by mixing in a little bran or other fiber-rich cereal.

(Continued on page 2.)
4. **GRAB AND GO AT HOME RATHER THAN THE DRIVE-THRU.** It’s easy to replicate many fast food breakfast items without the extra calories, fat and sodium. Scramble an egg (or egg substitute) the night before; toast a whole-wheat English muffin and add a fat-free cheese single; wrap it in a paper towel and refrigerate overnight. The next morning, microwave for 30 to 45 seconds to reheat, then grab and go. Fresh fruit is the ultimate “grab and go” food since it comes in its own package or mix up a fruit smoothie the night before, transfer to a portable drink bottle and refrigerate. Another portable option is to try a PBJ wrap by spreading peanut butter on a whole-wheat tortilla and microwaving for 30 to 45 seconds or until peanut butter is bubbly. Spread with apricot 100% fruit spread and sprinkle with chopped apricots. Roll up and enjoy it as you are out the door.

5. **USE CAUTION WITH CONVENIENCE.** Many grocery store convenience food items are very high in sodium. If it’s labeled “instant” chances are it’s high in sodium. Look for other options that are better nutrition options that don’t add significant preparation time. For example, the few minutes you save by using instant oatmeal isn’t worth the nutritional losses (or gains). Old fashioned oatmeal contains no sodium and only 1 gram of sugar, and it has more protein and fiber. Instant oatmeal varieties contain about 300 milligrams of sodium and 13 grams of sugar (equivalent to about 3 teaspoons) and less protein and fiber. Instant oatmeal may cook in the microwave in 90 seconds, but old fashioned oatmeal only takes 3 minutes. So, set your alarm 90 seconds earlier and go for unprocessed oatmeal!

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**BREAKFAST BOOSTERS FOR BUSY PEOPLE 7 DAYS A WEEK**

1. Fix a breakfast smoothie. Blend 1 cup non-fat milk or soy milk with one-half banana and some fresh or frozen berries. Add a couple tablespoons of non-fat dry milk powder or a tablespoon of soy protein powder to boost the protein content.

2. Toast some frozen whole-grain waffles and top with applesauce or low-fat yogurt and chopped almonds.

3. Spread a little peanut or soynut butter on whole-wheat toast, bagel or English muffin. Top with banana or apple slices. Enjoy it with a glass of non-fat milk.

4. Sauté a package of fresh or frozen diced onions and peppers. Store in the refrigerator and fold a half-cup into scrambled eggs for a quick Western scramble. Add it to a whole-grain mini pita pocket and top with low-fat cheese, ketchup or salsa.

5. Spoon low-fat granola, wheat germ and some fresh or dried blueberries into fat-free vanilla or lemon-flavored yogurt.

6. Cook a few hard-boiled eggs, and store in the refrigerator. (Tip: purchase a microwave egg cooker to cook a hard-boiled egg in just 45 seconds.) In the morning, grab a hard-boiled egg and a slice or two of whole-wheat toast. Enjoy it with a 6-ounce can of tomato or vegetable juice.

7. Save time cooking oatmeal by pre-measuring 1/2 cup old-fashioned oatmeal and 2 tablespoons raisins or other dried fruit. Portion into plastic sandwich bags. In the morning, place in a deep microwave-safe bowl and add 1 cup water. Microwave for 3 minutes. Stir in a small handful of chopped nuts and top with non-fat milk. Another option is to cook a batch of steel-cut oats in your crock pot, and reheat 1 cup for breakfast.
WAKE UP TO A GREAT BREAKFAST EVERY DAY

BUILDING A BETTER DIET: STEP 3

Use this tool to help you keep track of weekly key points, develop weekly goals and create a specific action plan for building a better diet to eat well for life.

KEY POINTS FOR WEEK 3:
1. Breakfast revs-up your metabolism to start the day off right.
2. Research shows that breakfast eaters weigh less than breakfast skippers.
3. You can still sleep in AND eat a quick breakfast.
4. It takes more time to go through the drive-thru for breakfast than to grab a quick bite at home. It just takes a little bit of planning.

GOALS FOR WEEK 3:
1. Refer back to the lifestyle changes that you need to improve (as identified on the “Are You Eating Well for Life?” introduction survey) to establish your weekly goals.
2. Commit to eating breakfast DAILY – do not skip.
3. Adopt two of the suggested strategies from this newsletter for shopping and preparing foods.
4. Continue writing entries in your Food Journal to notice any changes from week to week.

My accomplishments this week:

________________________________________

________________________________________

The challenges I faced this week:

________________________________________

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How I overcame these challenges or plan to overcome them:

________________________________________

________________________________________

How I celebrated my success!

________________________________________

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WEEK 3 RECIPE: HOMEMADE GRANOLA
4 cups old-fashioned rolled oats
1 1/2 cups toasted wheat germ
1/2 cup hulled sunflower seeds
1/2 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup frozen cranberry-juice concentrate, thawed
1/4 cup honey
2 tablespoons extra-light olive oil
2 teaspoons vanilla extract
2/3 cup dried cranberries

1. Preheat oven to 250°F. In a large bowl, stir together oats, wheat germ, sunflower seeds, and salt.
2. In a small bowl, stir together cranberry-juice concentrate, honey, oil, and vanilla. Pour mixture over oats mixture and, with a fork, stir to coat.
3. Spoon on to jelly-roll pan, spreading mixture out to an even layer. Bake 1 hour or until oats are lightly browned and crisp, stirring several times as mixture cooks.
4. Remove from oven, cool to room temperature, and stir in dried cranberries. Pack in an airtight container to store.
Makes about 6 1/2 cups.

WEEK 3 RECIPE: EGG-BACON SANDWICH
Whole-wheat, high-fiber or lite English muffin
1/4 cup egg substitute (or 1 egg)
2 slices low-fat turkey or soy bacon
1 teaspoon lite margarine

1. Toast muffins. Lightly spread with margarine.
2. Microwave or cook egg substitute in no-stick cooking spray.
3. Cook soy bacon in a hot skillet according to package directions.
4. Assemble sandwiches by placing the cooked egg and bacon in between muffin halves.
5. Eat and enjoy, or wrap in foil to keep warm on the go. Makes 1 serving.

Nutritional Facts per Serving:
258 calories, 7.8g total fat, 1.1g saturated fat, 2.7g monounsaturated fat, 3.4g polyunsaturated fat, 5.4g dietary fiber, 9g protein, 40g carbohydrate, 0mg cholesterol, 92mg sodium.

Good Source of:
fiber, magnesium, quercetin, selenium, vitamin E and zinc

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Directions: Record keeping has been shown to be one of the most effective tools for lifestyle change and weight management. Keep a food journal to record your meal and snack intake. Check off the food group(s) that the food belongs to and see where you need to improve. How close do you come to achieving a balanced diet? Make copies of this food journal to record your daily food intake.

**DATE:**  

**MY GOAL FOR TODAY:**  

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**WATER**  

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