



Health Hints



Eating Breakfast Is A Key Behavior For Staying Slender

(NAPSA)—A study published in the journal *Obesity Research* shows that eating breakfast every single day is a key behavior among people who average a 60 pound weight loss and have kept it off for six years. The study cites cereal as a favorite choice for breakfast.

Researchers who monitor the 3,000 participants of the National Weight Control Registry—an ongoing study of successful maintainers of significant weight loss in the United States—have discovered that nearly 80 percent eat breakfast everyday as part of their routine to stay slender.

Of the study participants who eat breakfast, 60 percent said they “always” or “usually” eat a bowl of cereal.

“It is striking that such a high proportion report eating breakfast every day of the week,” said the study’s lead researcher, Dr. Jim Hill of the University of Colorado, who is co-director of the National Weight Control Registry (NWCR).

“I’m not surprised that starting the day with a bowl of cereal for breakfast has proven to be one of the key components in successful weight loss and maintenance: it worked for me,” said study participant Jani Bielenberg of Denver, who lost 50 pounds and has kept it off since 1985.

The study involved researchers from the University of Colorado, University of Pittsburgh and Brown University and was made possible by grants from the National Institutes of Health and General Mills, maker of Cheerios, Wheaties and Total.

To qualify for the National Weight Control Registry, a person must have lost at least 30 pounds and maintained that weight loss for more than one year; however, the 3,000 registry participants average a 60 pound weight loss and have kept it off for an average of six years.

Data from Nielsen’s National Eating Trends Survey, presented at the annual conference of the North American Association for the Study of Obesity, show that women who are frequent cereal eaters (those who eat cereal more than seven times in a two-week



Jani Bielenberg, 44, of Denver lost 50 pounds and has kept it off since 1985. She says eating a bowl of cereal everyday to keep the pounds off, “worked for me.”

period) weigh about 8 pounds less on average than women who eat cereal infrequently or not at all.

Those who do not eat cereal frequently are more likely to be overweight or obese. Among women, infrequent cereal eaters are 16 percent more likely to be overweight than frequent cereal eaters, and male infrequent cereal eaters are 12 percent more likely to be overweight or obese.

Researchers involved with the NWCR study say the possible reasons regular breakfast eating may be an essential behavior for weight loss maintenance are: 1) eating breakfast may reduce hunger later in the day that leads to overeating; 2) breakfast eaters are able to better resist fatty and high caloric foods throughout the day; 3) nutrients consumed at breakfast may help people be more physically active.

A typical strategy for people who want to lose weight is to skip breakfast, which, along with obesity, is significantly increasing as a trend in the United States, according to the study.

Twenty-five percent of Americans now skip breakfast, and overweight and obesity rates have nearly doubled over the past decade.

“When I skip breakfast, I get so

hungry that by lunch time I’ve either eaten junk food or I overeat,” said Janet Wilson of Fort Myers, Fla., who says she is a typical “yo-yo” dieter.

On the other hand, Bonnie Chapman, a NWCR participant who has lost 50 pounds and has kept it off for six years, said, “Eating cereal for breakfast helps me not only lose weight, but helps me maintain my weight by keeping me full and preventing cravings.”

The National Weight Control Registry was established in 1994 by Drs. James Hill and Rena Wing to investigate the characteristics and behaviors of individuals who have been successful at achieving their goal of losing weight and keeping it off long-term.

The scientific journal *Obesity Research* is the official journal of the North American Association for the Study of Obesity.

The study falls on the heels of Surgeon General David Satcher’s “call to action” to prevent and decrease the overweight and obesity epidemic in the United States. More than 61 percent of adults are overweight or obese.

Qualified individuals who would like to participate in the ongoing NWCR study should call 1-800-606-NWCR or visit www.nwcr.ws.