

Pointers For Parents

Wake Up To The Benefits Of Breakfast

(NAPSA)—Ninety-three percent of Americans agree that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, yet less than half (44 percent) are eating breakfast every day. Here are a few ways breakfast helps to improve your day:

Breakfast Is Just Plain Good for You

Many Americans, including children, fall far short of consuming the recommended amounts of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*' "food groups to encourage"—whole grains, fat-free and low-fat milk and milk products, fruits and vegetables. Research shows that breakfast eaters are more likely to consume better-quality diets than breakfast skippers, and breakfast can help people meet the recommendations. Regular breakfast eaters consume higher intakes of fiber, calcium, vitamin A, vitamin C, riboflavin, zinc and iron as well as fewer calories, and less dietary fat and cholesterol. Those who skip breakfast are also less likely to make up for missed nutrients at other meals during the day.


Breakfast Is the "Weigh" to Go

Studies suggest that adults, children and adolescents who regularly eat a breakfast that includes high-fiber foods such as ready-to-eat cereals, calcium and low-fat milk products have a healthier body weight and/or body mass index.

According to findings from The National Weight Control Registry, almost eight in 10 adults who maintain a 30-plus-pound weight loss for at least a year eat breakfast every day. Breakfasts that are high protein, higher in fiber, higher in fat yet also low energy density may have a greater satiating effect (state of feeling full) and may improve the

Invest Time To Save Time

Invest a little planning time to gain the big benefits of breakfast.

- Sit down with the family to plan nutritious breakfasts for the week. Post the plan in plain sight in the kitchen.
- Add breakfast items to your shopping list so your kitchen is well stocked.
- Each evening, set the table for breakfast and put out nonperishables such as cereal boxes, oatmeal containers and fruit.
- Store milk, yogurt, 100 percent fruit juice and other perishable breakfast foods in the front of the fridge so they're easy to grab.
- If the family is brown-bagging breakfast, pack and label each person's bag the night before and store them in the fridge. Better yet, get everyone to assemble their own breakfast bag.
- On weekends, take time for a fun and healthful family breakfast. 

healthfulness of your overall diet by reducing the amount of food eaten over the rest of the day.

Breakfast Builds Better Bodies

Eating breakfast may provide other potential health benefits including promoting heart, digestive and bone health; reducing risk of metabolic syndrome; increasing physical energy; and helping children do better in school by improving memory, alertness, concentration, problem-solving ability, test scores, school attendance and mood.

For more, visit the International Food Information Council Foundation at www.foodinsight.org and search "breakfast."