



Quick breakfasts can be healthful

I know they say breakfast is “the most important meal of the day,” but I usually just don’t have time. Am I doing myself in by not eating breakfast?

Most nutrition experts wouldn’t put it in quite those terms, but overall, the answer is yes.

Nutrition research indicates that deciding not to eat breakfast can increase your appetite and food intake, leading to weight gain over time; negatively affect your overall food choices; and increase your risk of chronic disease, especially diabetes and cardiovascular disease. On the other hand, opting to eat breakfast not only usually increases the overall healthfulness of the diet, but is linked with better learning ability and school performance, both in younger children but in teens and college students, too.

Many people, like you, say they don’t have time for breakfast. Others say they skip breakfast in an attempt to lose weight, or that they’re just not hungry in the morning. But if non-breakfast-eaters could change that one habit — by waking up 10 minutes earlier, or understanding that eating a healthy breakfast can actually help prevent weight gain, or by snacking less at night so they are hungry in the morning — they could give a huge boost to their overall diet.

Here are some tips to make sure your breakfast is a healthy one:

- Choose a high-fiber cereal. If you don’t like the taste of high-fiber options, mix one half-and-half with your favorite cereal to get a fiber boost to start your day.
- Make a quick egg scramble by cooking liquid egg whites (such as Egg Beaters) and mixing in some salsa toward the end of the cooking time.
- No time to sit at the table? Drink a cup of milk and enjoy a granola bar on your way out the door. Choose granola bars with higher protein and less sugar and fat.
- Another time-saving option: Eat a spoonful of peanut butter or grab a handful of almonds before you leave the house, and then enjoy a banana, apple, or a bunch of grapes on your commute.

Other easy, healthful breakfast options include yogurt, berries, instant oatmeal and whole-grain toast. Nutrition professionals recommend having a wide variety of breakfast options on hand to allow you (and your body) to enjoy the varied benefits of different choices. If you still find you’re skipping breakfast more often than not, try planning the night before — set out the glass for your milk, your bowl and spoon for cereal, the frying pan for the eggs. Changing unhealthy habits isn’t easy; do what you can to make it as simple as possible.

Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or filipic.3@cfaes.osu.edu.



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