

DON'T SKIP BREAKFAST!



Mom always said to eat your breakfast. And, as they say, Mom knows best.

The traditional morning meal may be the most neglected one. And the trend is only growing. According to the *Journal of the American College of Nutrition*, American adults who skip breakfast increased from 14 to 25 percent between 1965 and 1991.

It's hardly any wonder then that the number of obese American adults also has grown, increasing from 23 percent in 1994 to 31 percent in 2000, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Studies show that people who skip breakfast have increased risk of struggling with a weight problem. The body uses calories from early in the day more effectively than those consumed late in the day. Eating a good breakfast generally improves your overall diet. People who skip breakfast are more likely to snack throughout the day.

According to the food and nutrition experts at the American Dietetic Association, the nation's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals, eating soon after you wake up not only helps you manage weight, it provides energy, leading to better concentration and problem-solving throughout the day.

Breakfast refuels the body after eight to 12 hours without food. It replenishes glucose levels – also known as blood sugar – which are essential for the brain and are the body's main energy source. Blood glucose also helps prepare your muscles for the day's physical activity.

Some contend that by eating breakfast, you'll have hunger pains throughout the day. Although true in some cases, the choice of food often plays a part in that discomfort. Foods high in sugar – even fruit sugar – raise blood sugar levels quickly and trigger hunger and drowsiness a few hours later.

Try to blend proteins and carbohydrates at breakfast. Hearty carbohydrates will give that boost of energy to jumpstart your day. A mix of protein generates the staying power to keep your body going strong until lunch.

Cereal – the healthy kind, not the sugary stuff – represents one of the quickest and most versatile meals for the morning rush. Milk and cereal can offer the right combination of protein and carbohydrates to start your day.

Start the day moving in the right direction. Eat your breakfast and enjoy the benefits long endorsed by Dr. Mom.

Sources:

- "The Importance of Breakfast" – www.bellybytes.com/articles/breakfast2.shtml
- "The Importance of Breakfast: Fuel Up and Start the Day Right" – www.adksportsfitness.com/back_issues/august2001/articles/nutrition.html
- "Breakfast Importance: Start Your Day Right" – www.vegetarian-nutrition.info/nuggets/breakfast.php
- "A breakfast of meat and eggs or nothing at all linked to extra weight" – www.universityofcalifornia.edu/news/article/5630

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