

Get Up and Go with Better Breakfasts



Could you expect to get very far driving a car that is low on gas? Of course not. Yet many people start the day's activities without eating breakfast, not even thinking about its effect on their performance. The American Dietetic Association says, "Tests prove that the physical skills, intellectual performance, and attitude toward achievement all suffer in people who don't eat breakfast."

If you could do better with breakfast but don't seem to have the time or the appetite for a morning meal, try these strategies.

- Plan your breakfast the night before, so you don't have to take time in the morning when you're rushed or half awake.
- Pack a quick breakfast "to go" the night before. Bag a couple of cheese cubes, some crackers, and a piece of fruit and eat them on the way to work or school.
- Don't limit yourself to traditional breakfast foods like toast and cereal or ham and eggs. Any nutritious food is fine if it appeals to you. If you prefer pita bread stuffed with tuna fish and tomato wedges, for example, help yourself.
- If you don't have much of an appetite in the morning, eat small portions. Have half a slice of toast or half a bowl of cereal with a few ounces of milk, for instance. Then eat a piece of fruit or a cup of plain yogurt later, when your appetite wakes up.
- Start your day with a good source of vitamin C. Strawberries, grapefruit, and oranges are refreshing wake-up foods, and one serving will meet the recommended allowance for vitamin C.
- Include a good source of protein with your breakfast. Research suggests protein foods can help keep you alert. Milk with cereal or toast is better than just fruit or fruit juice. So is a glass of milk and an English muffin topped with pineapple bits and sprinkled with cinnamon. Limit ham, sausage, and eggs, though; they're high in saturated fat and, in the case of eggs, cholesterol. Avoid commercial pastries, croissants, and muffins; they tend to be high in sugar, fat, and calories.