

Power Up Your Day with Breakfast

At school today your child learned why it is important to eat a healthy breakfast. He or she also learned how to make healthy food choices for breakfast. Do you want a bright start to your day? Want energy to get up and go? Well then, eat breakfast! Eating a morning meal (breakfast) helps to "break the fast" from the night before. It gives your body the energy and nutrients it needs to start the day. Breakfast gives your brain a head start, too. It's true! Studies show that children who eat breakfast have more energy, are more alert and generally perform better in school than children who don't eat breakfast. They're able to concentrate better and tend to have fewer absences.

Be a good role model for eating breakfast. Make breakfast a priority in your house. Let your children see you eating breakfast or grabbing something quick to eat on the way to work. It will be a higher priority for children if it is for adult family members!

Breakfast can be any nutritious food. Foods from each of the main food groups can be eaten as part of a breakfast meal. Be creative! Try trading some of those traditional breakfast food choices for some of these quick, easy to prepare combinations.

Jump Start Your Brain with These Combinations:

- Fruit and whole grain cereal added to yogurt
- Leftover pizza and a glass of milk
- Crackers with cheese cubes and a glass of 100-percent fruit juice
- Leftover macaroni and cheese and vegetable juice
- Fruit smoothies (a blend of yogurt, milk and fruit) and whole grain toast
- Bread sticks with peanut butter and apple slices

If you have little time for breakfast, take some grab-n-go foods along to eat later.

- Fresh fruit or cut up raw vegetables and a whole grain breakfast cereal bar
- Crackers with a dab of peanut butter and a banana
- Cheese cubes or string cheese and dried fruit such as cherries or raisins
- 100-percent fruit juice boxes and a small, re-sealable plastic bag with dry whole grain cereal or trail mix
- Carton of yogurt



Power Up Your Day!

Our family is learning why it is important to eat breakfast. Eating breakfast helps us concentrate and learn in school, feel good until lunchtime, and have energy for work and play. Name some healthy breakfast foods that are easy and fun.

First, list some traditional breakfast foods.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

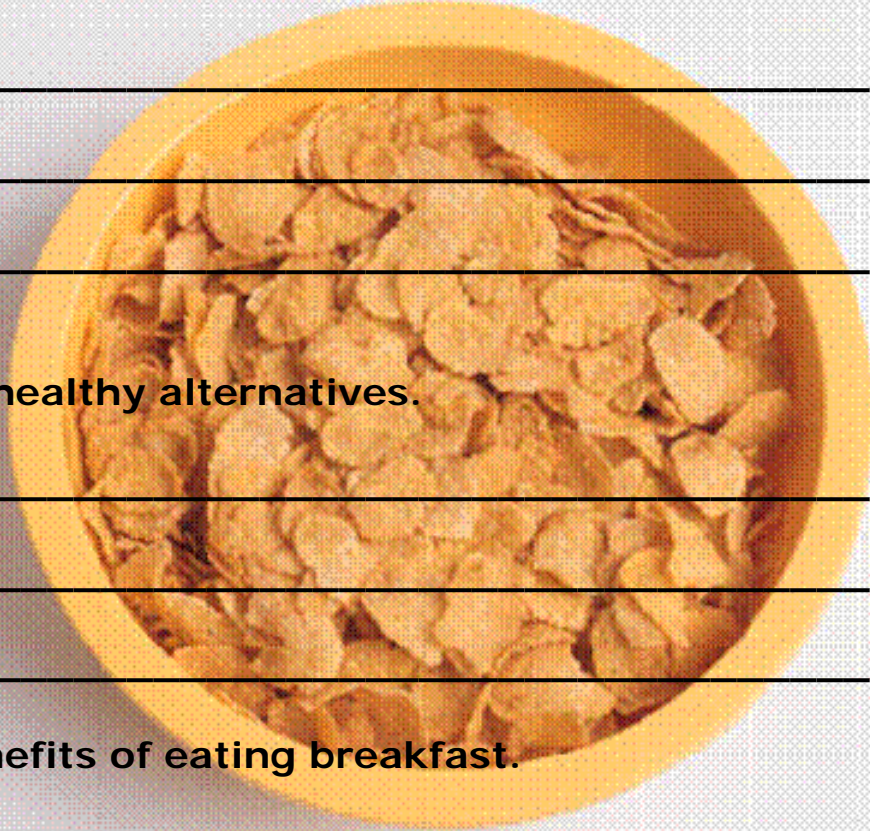
Next, list some healthy alternatives.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Now list the benefits of eating breakfast.



Breakfast Food Word Scramble

1. Z A P I Z

2. R U Y G O T

3. H E S E E C

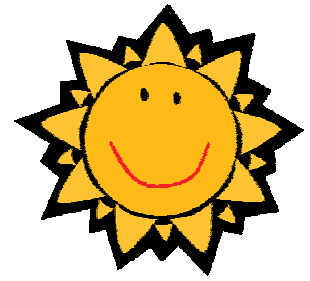
4. A N P T E U R T E B U T

5. I K M L

6. L R E C A E

{See answers on page

Question Time



Child: Why is it important that we eat breakfast? (For example, compare days when you do and don't eat breakfast. Any differences in energy to play, concentration, or how you feel?)

Adult: How many days in the past week did we eat breakfast? (Count the number of days in the past week for both the adult and child.)

Child: What are some of the things that keep us from eating breakfast? (Hint: Work and school schedules, bus comes too early, not hungry, no time, etc.?)

Adult: What are some things that we could do to eat breakfast more often? (Get things ready the night before, get up earlier, plan breakfasts ahead of time?)

Child: Why is it important that I see you eating breakfast every day? (Hint: What makes a child want to eat breakfast as often as adults do?)

Healthy Breakfast Beverages

Milk is a healthy beverage because it has nutrients like calcium and protein. 100% juice has more nutrients than juice drinks. You can make sure you choose a healthy beverage for breakfast by having milk in a glass or on cereal or 100% juice. You may also prefer to make a healthy fruit smoothie for breakfast with milk and fruit. Sugar sweetened drinks have "empty calories" because they have few nutrients and are not a healthy choice for breakfast. Remember to power up your day with a healthy beverage!

Our Family Goals:

Include a healthy beverage for breakfast. Make sure that children see adults eating breakfast everyday.

(Agree on another family goal and write it here.)

As Your Child Grows

Parents can create a positive outlook on breakfast by showing children that they enjoy a morning meal. Children need positive encouragement from **positive role models**. Children who see their parents eat breakfast are more likely to eat breakfast too.

When families eat breakfast together, they can use the time to talk and interact with each other. Sitting down together for even a short time can be important for families to get connected and talk about what is happening in their lives. At the breakfast table, family members can check schedules and support each other in daily activities.

Breakfast can be a fun activity for parents and children on days when they do not have to rush out the door. Try a new recipe for a healthy breakfast alternative to spice up your routine.

On the Web

Check out these Web sites with your child:

Quaker Oats: <http://www.quakeroatmeal.com/StriveforFive/Index.cfm>

National Dairy Council: <http://www.nutritionexplorations.org/kids/activities/detective.asp>

Answers to puzzle on page 2:

1. pizza, 2. yogurt, 3. cheese, 4. peanut butter,
5. milk, 6. cereal



Cheese Quesadillas

Ingredients:

- 2 8-inch flour tortillas
- 1/2 cup grated cheddar or Monterey Jack cheese
- 1 tablespoon chopped vegetables such as onions, tomatoes, peppers, green chili peppers (optional)
- Salsa (optional)

Procedure:

1. All food preparers must wash their hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds before starting to prepare this recipe. Be sure that all work surfaces are clean.
 2. Preheat oven to 350° F.
 3. Place one tortilla on a baking pan or cookie sheet. Sprinkle with grated cheese and vegetables, if desired.
 4. Cover with the second tortilla and bake in the oven for 10 minutes or until cheese melts. (Note: If preparing this recipe in a microwave oven, heat the tortillas on 100-percent power in the microwave for 30 to 60 seconds or until the cheese melts.) Cut into quarters and serve with salsa.
- *Makes 4 servings*

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