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## The Benefits of Breakfast

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### Story Time with The Dietitian

#### **Bob and His Gas Guzzling Truck**

Once upon a time there was a man named Bob. Bob was constantly running around town in his trusty truck. One day Bob decided to go to Portland. He climbed up into his tall truck and turned the ignition. As he left his driveway he noticed that his truck was on empty. Crumb!

Bob swung open the door, jumped out and stomped his feet. *What a demanding truck!* he thought. *Always begging me for gas!* Bob kicked his truck in the tire and said to it:

*Truck—I don't have time to stop for gas. But I promise if you take me to Portland...I'll fill you up as soon as we get there!*

Needless to say Bob and his truck did not make it very far.

The End.

#### **The Moral of The Story**

You may not think that you would ever be as silly as Bob. But guess what? Every time you skip breakfast thinking you'll just "fill up later" you are doing the exact same thing. Of course your body will still run, but not optimally. And sooner or later your breakfast procrastination will backfire—ruining your plans for a healthy body or a healthy weight. Instead of skipping your morning fuel, make breakfast a daily goal.

Learn more about why typical excuses just don't cut it and why breakfast is so critical for people trying to lose weight (or anyone who needs a dietary improvement) on the next few pages.

## **No More Excuses—Why Skipping Breakfast Almost Always Backfires!**

I've heard plenty of excuses for skipping breakfast. Below are some common ones:

- *I'm not hungry in the morning!*
- *I'm trying to lose weight—any calories I can cut will help!*
- *If I eat breakfast I just end up hungrier later!*
- *I don't have time!*

I'm sure you've made at least one of the above excuses. We all have days when we're rushing around – even I have missed breakfast in my life! But I'm not here to deal with the exceptions among you. I want to have a heart to heart with those of you who regularly skip your first meal with excuses like the ones above. Let's look at why your excuses simply won't cut it!

### ***I'm not hungry in the morning!***

If you aren't hungry in the morning it's probably because you're eating too much too late in the day. It's also because you've trained your body to ignore its healthy appetite til whenever you finally feed it after it has starved over night. That's right. When you wake up in the morning your body is in a fasted stated. That's why it's called a breakfast because you are creating a “break” in your “fast.”

After an overnight fast your blood sugar will be lower than usual. Blood sugar is your brain's favorite food. If you put off your first meal for hours your brain will not be working at its best, your concentration will suffer and you will be slower in your tasks.

There is no golden rule that breakfast has to be at 7am. Depending upon when you wake up it can be as early as 5:30 am to as late as 10 am—even a brunch is better than nothing. But don't expect to function optimally—mentally or physically—if you don't eat something before you start your day's work.

If you're still not convinced. Be adventurous. Try an experiment. Give yourself 2-3 weeks of breakfast eating. If after 2-3 weeks of a regular breakfast you don't start to crave a morning meal—then I'll throw my hands up and say “okay you win, your body obviously doesn't need food to function.” Which is really cool because you'll save tons of money at the grocery store.

### ***I'm trying to lose weight—any calories I can cut will help!***

Skipping breakfast to lose weight is one of the biggest myths ever. Yes you can cut calories by cutting out your breakfast, but for some mysterious reason most people who are overweight skip breakfast quite regularly—skipping this first meal doesn't seem to be working for them too well.

If you've read my special report on dieting (see [www.goatsmart.com](http://www.goatsmart.com)) you have learned about the National Weight Control Registry. This long term ongoing study of over 3,000 people has virtually proven that eating breakfast and maintaining a healthy weight *go hand in hand*. All the people in the study have lost significant amount of weight and all of them have kept it off for over a year. Close to 80% of these same people eat breakfast regularly!

It may seem like skipping calories early on will help you start off in a low-calorie mindset. But the body senses deprivation. Start your day with deprivation and you'll *very likely* end up overeating later in the day. It's really tough to deprive yourself without getting a backlash of hunger and cravings later.

In fact, feeding yourself (and *well*) early in the day will likely help you minimize cravings or binge eating later in the day. Plus you'll boost your metabolism a bit instead of creating the stunted metabolism of morning starvation! Mmmm, it's past my supertime as I'm writing this and I'm getting hungry just thinking about breakfast.

And speaking of supper. If you really really want to deprive yourself. Do it at supper. Diet in the evening when you don't need to fuel up for anything but sleep.

### ***If I eat breakfast, I just end up hungrier later!***

Remember that hunger is there for a reason—it means your body needs to refuel. The answer is not to drown out your natural hunger by starving it, but to honor your hunger by fueling your body.

If eating breakfast creates a bigger hunger before lunch than not eating breakfast—*perhaps you're not eating enough*. Just like the weight conscious who try to *eliminate* breakfast calories, there's also a breed of dieters who choose to *skimp* on their breakfast calories. Neither plan works too well.

If you kick start your appetite with a tiny sliver of food—of course you'll be ravenous by mid-morning. Instead of teasing your stomach, fill it with nourishment. Start your day with a bigger breakfast than you are used to—at least 400 calories worth of food. Remember, feed yourself for the day first! Then if you think it's time to reduce calories, do it at night when your life starts to wind down.

### ***I don't have time!***

This is probably the most common excuse of all ... Time! We are all short on time. In fact there is no way to do everything we want to do in one day, every day. Those of you who disagree have probably found a way to simplify your life so that you've minimized your wants. Otherwise the list of "to-do's" is endless.

You can keep making this excuse or you can decide that a solid breakfast is *worth your time*. I promise you, it's worth it—but you have to actually believe this fact first.

And guess what? It doesn't have to be a slow agonizing process of slaving over a hot stove—especially if you plan ahead, stock your cupboards with quick and easy foods, and commit to those few extra minutes every morning. Your belly and your brain will thank you for it!

See the next couple of pages for tips on making quick and healthy breakfasts!

## **Quick and Healthy Breakfast Ideas**

### **What Is a Healthy Breakfast?**

The goal of a healthy breakfast is 1) to provide you with enough fuel to survive until lunch (or 4 to 5 hours) and 2) to squeeze in foods that are much harder to get later in the day: Whole grains, fruit, and milk or soymilk. And like all meals, a healthy breakfast should be *low* in fat, but it doesn't have to be absent of fat.

You must admit that whole grain cereals and breads are fairly quick to prepare—no cooking required unless you prefer hot cereals. And you may have heard...you can now buy these really cool devices called....ahem... "microwave ovens" – I hear they can cook regular oats in less than 5 minutes. Pretty cool invention don't you think? Cook your oats and in less time than it takes to do your hair and makeup! And guys—you too can find something to do while your oatmeal is cooking—even if it's relaxing and getting mentally prepared for the day (which is not a gender-specific task ladies).

Next, fruit—again easy. Pop open a can or scrub a fresh fruit and it's ready to eat. 60 seconds max prep time!

Milk is the other excellent breakfast food for providing the calcium, magnesium, and riboflavin your mind, muscles, and bones need. Drink a glass, pour it on your cereal, or introduce your granola to your favorite low-sugar yogurt—all great options. For those with lactose intolerance or vegan preference—soy milk is a fabulous alternative.

See the next page for some tasty combinations in quantities that are 400-500 Calories\*. Don't be scared about the calorie content. Your breakfast should be at least 1/3 of your total day's calories. Even on a 1200-1500 Calorie diet—you can afford these breakfasts as long as your other meals are not terribly large. Remember, eat like a King or Queen at breakfast...and then let your other meals be the "supplements."

Finally, don't be afraid of recycling leftovers at breakfast time. There's no harm in eating last night's casserole if last night's casserole was quite nutritious. Just throw in small fresh fruit for good measure and get on with your day!

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\* For those with type 2 diabetes and counting carbs—you can use many of these breakfasts, but perhaps in smaller quantities. If you have specific questions about substitutions, schedule an appointment for a personalized meal plan that will help control your blood glucose.

## Breakfasts For You!

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Whole Wheat English Muffin  | ½ whole wheat bagel  |
| 1 tsp trans-fat free margarine (like Smart Balance)               | 1 T peanut butter  |
| 1 T low sugar jam (Edie Smith's Triple Fruit Preserves are tasty) | 1 Light Yogurt   |
| 1 cup skim or 1% milk   | Small apple  |
| 1 orange  | Safeway Energy Bar (rectangular "bagel")   |
| 1 egg   | 1 string cheese  |
| ½ cup low-fat granola or grape nuts                               | Small banana   |
| Light Yogurt  | V8   |
| ¾ cup blueberries or small banana                                 | 1 cup Quaker Oatmeal squares cereal and ¼ cup almonds or other nuts all in a zip-locked bag! |
| 12 almonds  | Light Yogurt   |
| 1 cup oatmeal   | ½ whole wheat bagel  |
| 2 Tb raisins  | 1 T peanut butter  |
| 2 tsp brown sugar   | 1 Light Yogurt   |
| 1/8 <sup>th</sup> of a cup walnuts                                | Small apple  |
| ½ cup cottage cheese, nonfat                                      | 1 slice leftover pizza   |
| ½ cup pineapple   | Orange   |
| 1 cup Cheerios  | Yogurt   |
| 1 cup skim or 1% milk   | English Muffin Sandwich  |
| 1 medium banana   | - 1 English Muffin w/healthy marg.   |
| 1 T peanut butter   | - ¼ cup egg substitute, scrambled in a nonstick pan  |
| 2 slices whole wheat toast  | - 1 slice reduced fat cheese or Canadian bacon, or veggie sausage                            |
| 1 tsp healthy margarine   | 1 cup canned fruit   |
| 1 hard boiled egg   |  |
| 1 cup cantaloupe  |  |
| 1 cup skim milk (in latte if preferred)                           |  |