

For back issues visit the Family Matters Web site At www.ext.colostate.edu/Pubs/fammatrs/fmmenu.html

For more information contact the CSU Extension office nearest you, or visit our Web site at: www.ext.colostate.edu

Articles in Family Matters are copyrighted, but may be reproduced in full without modification if credit is given to Family Matters, Family and Consumer Sciences, Colorado State University Extension
For all other requests contact the author.

Thank you to Colorado State University Extension of Denver County for support of the Spanish translation of Family Matters.

Extension programs are available to all without discrimination. Colorado State University, U.S. Department of Agriculture and Colorado counties cooperating.

Breakfast Builds Better Bodies

By Karen Massey, Family and Consumer Science Agent, Routt County Extension

The best way to start the day is to eat a good breakfast. Most people agree that breakfast is important, but many Americans are skipping this important meal. The scientific evidence is clear; a healthy breakfast provides your body with important nutrients. Eating breakfast has been shown to help maintain body weight, and improves focus at school and work.



Breakfast can be loaded with nutrients if you select a healthy variety of foods. Watch out, some popular breakfast items like donuts and muffins are full of sugar and low in fiber and nutrients. Make healthy choices such as whole-grain cereals, low-fat milk and yogurt, and fruit or 100% fruit juice. Breakfast eaters tend to get more fiber, calcium, vitamins A & C, riboflavin, zinc and iron than breakfast skippers. Breakfasts that include ready-to-eat cereal are high in nutrients because they are vitamin fortified and naturally low in fat.

A good breakfast can help kids and adults maintain a healthy body weight. Studies show, breakfast skippers are at greater risk for weight gain, while breakfast eaters tend to have healthier weight. So don't skip a healthy breakfast to save calories. By skipping breakfast, you might get hungry before lunch and snack on high fat and sugar foods.

Breakfast can help you stay alert and focused. Eating breakfast may help children do better in school by improving memory, alertness and problem-solving abilities.

Tips for Success:

- Build your breakfast by picking 2-3 foods from the Food Guide Pyramid:
 - low-fat milk and milk products (low-fat yogurt, low-fat milk)
 - whole-grain breads and cereals (oatmeal, muffin, toast)
 - fruit or vegetables (banana, 100% fruit juice, carrots)
- Plan ahead to eat breakfast. Save time by setting out bowls and boxes of cereal the night before. Cutting fruit, or veggies for an omelet, will make morning preparations faster.
- Keep your kitchen well-stocked with high-fiber cereals, low-fat milk and yogurt, eggs and fruit or 100% fruit juices.
- Make sure to drink all of the milk in the bottom of the cereal bowl. It will contain a lot of vitamins that washed off your fortified cereal.

Let's Talk:

Your kids are more likely to eat breakfast if you do, too. While you are sharing that morning meal, take the time to explain how breakfast builds better bodies. Discuss the nutrition label on cereal boxes and milk cartons so that the kids learn where their nutrients come from. On weekends, take time for a fun family breakfast when you can share the week's events with one another. Eating breakfast together helps instill more healthful eating habits in kids as they grow up.

Recipe for Health:

Easy Breakfast Ideas:

- Make a large batch of oatmeal to last all week. Add raisins, nuts or other toppings to add interest.
- Blend fruit, yogurt and juice to make a breakfast smoothie.
- Boil, scramble or poach an egg and serve with whole-grain toast.
- Spread peanut or almond butter on whole-grain toast for a portable meal.

