



Breakfast: It really is for champions?

We have been told time and time again that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, yet nearly one-fifth of all adults choose to pass on the Wheaties. What is the big deal about breakfast? Can a solid breakfast really make or break your fitness goals? Read on as I answer your most pressing questions on this popular subject...

Why eat Breakfast?

Let's dissect the word 'breakfast'. When you take it apart you find two words with an all-important hidden message. **Break – Fast**. I can hear your wheels spinning on this one! That's right, breakfast is the meal that *breaks* the *fast* that your body goes into each and every night when you sleep.

When breakfast is skipped, your body continues to fast until you eat later in the day.

This is a problem for two reasons.

Problem #1: Your brain needs fuel to function at its peak. This fuel comes in the form of glucose derived from food and is needed to walk, talk and perform all other activities. When you skip breakfast your brain is forced to work extra hard in breaking down stored carbohydrates or to turn fats and proteins into usable forms of glucose. **Eating breakfast has been proven to improve concentration, increase your problem solving capabilities, enhance overall mental performance and even boosts your memory and mood.**

Problem #2: Your metabolism will go into 'famine' mode. Three to four hours after you eat, your metabolism shuts down and acts as if it needs to store food. This is a great function to have if a famine were to break out, leaving you without food for days. Since this is likely not the case for you, it is pretty annoying when your body starts packing on the pounds in an attempt to protect you from starvation! **Eating breakfast communicates with your body the fact that you are healthy, well fed and not in need of extra fat storage.**

What about the cut calories?

"Skipping breakfast is how I cut calories out of my diet." I can't tell you how often I hear this response when I encourage people to eat breakfast. What these "calorie cutters" don't realize is that they are the ones who turn to snacking later in the day in an attempt to ward off low energy levels. Allowing your body to become over-hungry leads to distorted satiety signals, and leaves the door wide open for overeating later in the day.

Start your day with breakfast and then continue to eat smaller meals and snacks throughout the day for optimal calorie burning.

What's for Breakfast?

Now that you are convinced that breakfast is worth your time, it's time to decide what to have! A recent study done by FoodWatch, a Minnesota-based consulting firm that watches food trends, revealed that most people are basically eating *dessert for breakfast*, due to the high quantities of on-the-go breakfast foods that are processed, packaged and pumped full of refined carbohydrates.

Another study recently proved that **high fiber, low fat breakfasts promote healthy weight control much more effectively than highly refined breakfast foods.**

Try the following On-The-Go Breakfast Selections for a blend of hearty carbohydrates, protein and fat and experience optimal morning energy.

- Low Fat Yogurt with Fresh Fruit
- Low Fat Cottage Cheese and a Cherry Oatmeal Muffin.
- Hard Boiled Egg and Whole Wheat Toast
- Scrambled Egg White on Half a Bagel
- Whole Wheat Tortilla rolled with Scrambled Egg Beaters and Salsa
- Soy Milk with Whole Grain Cereal and Fresh Fruit