

The Most Important Meal of the Day?

You're running late...you've overslept, and need to make the bus. Out of bed, a quick wash, throw on some clothes...breakfast? No time!

Does this scenario sound familiar? For so many of us, rushing around in the morning means that we either miss breakfast completely, or we grab some fast food on the way to work or school.

Breakfast is the easiest thing to skip in the morning...you wouldn't exactly go out of the house without getting dressed, would you?

So what's the big deal? Well, it turns out that breakfast is pretty important. A good breakfast can help improve your mood, can help children to perform better at school, and is really important for the health of you and your family.

In this fact sheet we're going to talk about what makes good and bad breakfasts. We're also going to give you some tips on how to make time for breakfast, and some quick and easy mouth-watering breakfast recipes.

Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day!



In a recent school survey in County Clare, 42 % of students came to school with no breakfast!

What Makes a Good Breakfast?



Perfect porridge:

1. Put 1/3 of a cup of oats in a bowl with 2/3 of a cup of milk
2. Stir and put in the microwave
3. Cook for 2-3 minutes
4. Stir well, let it cool & eat!
5. Don't burn your mouth!

Check with your parents before using the microwave.

Why not add some raisins, dried apricots, chopped fruit or some seeds? Raisins and sultanas are a good way to sweeten porridge.

You need to eat something that will release energy over a long period of time. If you eat junk for breakfast, you get a quick blast of energy - but this won't last, and you will soon have an energy slump. You'll be craving high energy snacks before you know it!

Porridge is made from oats...and we know that it contains slow-release carbohydrates (great for athletes), soluble fibre and antioxidants. Oats can even lower cholesterol levels, so are really good for your heart!

If your family don't like porridge, why not make your own **muesli**? Just combine porridge oats with dried fruit, nuts, seeds, chopped fresh fruit, and milk for a super healthy and tasty breakfast. Combine the dried ingredients in advance in a large tupperware container.

Wholemeal foods make great breakfasts, so wholemeal toast is a good option. Why not try some triple grain bread for toasting? Boiled egg on toast is a substantial way to kick-start your day.

Breakfast is an ideal time to eat some fruit...why not chop your favourite fruit into your cereal? Or just grab some fruit for a morning snack. Fruit is great for performance and health.

Cereal Bars:
A Healthy Snack?
These are usually full of sugar, and are not particularly healthy. Don't believe the hype. Avoid.

Top Tips for Breakfast Time!

Find The Time For Breakfast!

- Finish homework in the evening
- Lay out your clothes the night before – find those lost shoes!
- Get up 15 min early
- Don't stay up too late!
- Avoid morning TV and computer games.
- Make your muesli the night before, or set out your breakfast ingredients.
- Microwave your porridge!
- Keep a healthy fruit bowl
- Try different healthy breakfasts-find something you like!



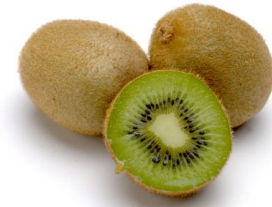
Porridge with dried fruit, linseed and honey...posh porridge! Top choice for performance

Follow these top tips to make time for breakfast:

- Don't eat meats like bacon and sausage every day...they are high in salt and fat
- Breakfast rolls and sausage rolls should be a treat...not an everyday breakfast
- Try and have some oatmeal for breakfast...porridge or home-made muesli
- Be imaginative! Try a "banana-dog" - a banana in a wholemeal roll with some honey and raisins – an unusual and tasty breakfast!
- Eat some fruit at breakfast time – chop some apple or banana into your porridge or cereal
- Don't like sloppy cereal? How about a boiled egg on wholemeal toast...quick and healthy!
- Don't skip breakfast! Skipping breakfast makes weight control *harder* and is a bad idea
- Can't eat first thing in the morning? Eat something light (like fruit) and have a snack later –a healthy sandwich at morning break time
- Parents: Lead by example...if you sit down to a healthy breakfast, your children will get the idea
- Forcing children to "clean the plate" is a bad idea...try not to control your child's food intake...just provide them with healthy options

The Bottom Line

Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day! A decent bit of breakfast will help your family to perform and will be good for your health!



Fruit is great for helping performance, and can protect us from heart disease and certain cancers...get a bit of fruit in your breakfast!

What About Packets of Cereal?

Some packets of cereal are very sugary. Frosties and Coco-Pops are 37% sugar, Honey-Nut Shredded Wheat is 16% sugar and Cheerios are 21% sugar. That's a lot of sugar!

Studies show that sugary breakfast may cause you to eat more during the day...and you'll probably feel hungry during the morning. Many cereals are also high in salt...yes, salt! 100g of Frosties contains 1.5 grams of salt...almost half the daily recommended amount for a child.

Breakfast cereals usually have added vitamins and minerals...a **bogus** attempt to make them look healthy! Don't be conned...you'd usually be better off with porridge, wholemeal toast or home-made muesli...it will be cheaper and tastier too! If you go for cereal, choose one that is high in fibre and low in sugar (e.g. shredded wheat, weetabix)