



Breaking the Fast

The bottom line is breakfast is an essential meal. Eating the right foods at this meal will greatly enhance the effectiveness of your day. Breakfast is also the daily kick-start on your metabolism. If you're looking to lose body fat, eating an early breakfast will help the cause. Don't worry that you get hungrier mid-morning by doing this, it's a key sign you're burning calories efficiently. An appropriate breakfast will:

- Provide consistent and long lasting energy by keeping your blood sugar stable.
- Improve your focus and concentration.
- Reduce the need for caffeine and other stimulants.

Protein's the Key

When eating breakfast, the nutrient people most often neglect is protein. Including protein is vital if you wish to reap the benefits breakfast has to offer. Protein does an excellent job of maintaining a steady blood sugar level, resulting in sustained and even energy for your daily activities. Protein has the added benefit of helping you burn more calories by raising your metabolic rate.

Breakfast Protein Suggestions

- **Low or non-fat cottage cheese** (3-4) oz.
- **Eggs, egg whites, or egg substitute** (1-2 eggs or equivalent)
- **Healthy turkey or chicken breakfast links** - low in saturated fat, high in protein. Most super markets carry these either in the meat or natural foods section. (1-2 links)
- **Protein smoothie** - a great way to have a quick and portable breakfast, our favorite:
 - 4 oz. orange juice and 4 oz. water or skim milk
 - 4 large frozen strawberries (1/2 - 1 cup of other frozen berries)
 - 1/2 medium banana (best when peeled and frozen beforehand)
 - Blend and add 1-2 Tbsp. of your choice of protein powder.

What about Milk?

Milk by itself does not count as a protein. Skim or non-fat milk (best choice for adults) is a good source of calcium, but is primarily a carbohydrate! However, when eaten together, milk does help increase the protein quality of foods such as oatmeal and peanut butter.

Bringing It All Together

Now that we have protein taken care of, what else do we need to round out a winning breakfast? Make sure to add in a quality carbohydrate source. Good examples would be oatmeal, unfrosted shredded wheat, a slice of whole grain bread or 1/2 a whole wheat bagel. Fresh fruit is always a good choice. Don't forget berries for their cancer-fighting anti oxidant properties! Packaged foods with added sugar should not be part of the equation. A little bit of fat will also help sustain your energy and curb your appetite. Examples - a tablespoon of natural peanut butter or a teaspoon of butter (not margarine), 1/4 of a fresh avocado, an egg yolk with your whites. Check out our Super Foods list for other ideas.

Here are some great and easy breakfast examples!

1.
-1 cup cooked oatmeal
-or-
-1/2 cup shredded wheat (not frosted!),
top with a sliced banana and skim
milk.
2.
-1 Tbsp. natural peanut butter
(non-hydrogenated) on
1 slice whole grain bread, with
1/2 apple and a cup of skim milk.
3.
-1 piece whole wheat toast
topped with non or low-fat
cottage cheese and topped with
a blend of Splenda and cinnamon.
4.
-egg whites or egg substitute topped with
fresh salsa and a tbsp of feta. Wrap in a whole
wheat tortilla.