

What Is A 'Good' Breakfast?



You get up in the morning, you rush to get ready for work, you dash out the door without having breakfast. Perhaps you grab a croissant or muffin with your coffee en route, or even go for a full fry-up. Unfortunately, when it comes to being healthy, none of these options is a great way to start your day. Breakfast, it would seem, is a dilemma that many of us face each day. Either we don't have time for breakfast, or we don't appear to have many healthy options. Having

no breakfast is a problem, because it means that you start the day on an empty stomach. By the time you get into the swing of your day, your blood-sugar levels are low. The result: you need an instant sugar fix, which usually means reaching for a biscuit or a pastry or some other easily available option.

So what is a good, healthy breakfast and why should we eat one?

- **A good breakfast can help give you the energy you need for the morning.**
- **Eating breakfast may reduce snacking on sugary foods before lunch.**
- **A healthy breakfast provides vitamins and minerals you need for vitality.**

So why not choose one of these delicious breakfasts for a healthy start to the day?

Porridge made with fresh fruit, nuts and seeds - Oats are a good source of insoluble fibre and release energy slowly, making you feel fuller for longer. If avoiding dairy, use coconut or unsweetened almond milk to make the porridge. A couple of tablespoons of fresh berries, or other fruit of your choice, will give you plenty of vitamin C, while a tablespoon of mixed raw nuts along with ground flax seeds will supply essential fatty acids, protein and additional fibre. You can even mash up half a banana and cook with the porridge for a lovely sweet flavour. Try adding grated frozen ginger, nutmeg or cinnamon. You can also try using quinoa flakes to make the porridge – these can be found in whole food shops and maintain the porridge consistency, but provide even more protein to your breakfast and are great for those on gluten-free plans.



Muesli, fresh fruit and natural unsweetened yoghurt - Adding fresh fruit to some unsweetened muesli boosts your daily fruit count. Look for unsweetened Dorset or Jordans cereals or Supermarket own brand (check labels first so see if sugar has been added). If needed, you can find gluten-free muesli, but it's better to find these in whole food shops, as they will have brands that do gluten-free muesli with no added sugar. Mix with some organic natural yoghurt or alternatively

use coconut yoghurt, for those who are avoiding dairy or just want a change! If yoghurt is too heavy, then go for almond or coconut milk.

Avocado with wholemeal toast and leafy greens – Avocados are a great way to start the day! If you add a handful of leafy green veg on the side such as: baby spinach, rocket, lambs lettuce or watercress you instantly add a rich source of iron, calcium, potassium, magnesium, vitamins K, C, E and many of the B vitamins. If avoiding wheat or then go for rye bread, or if completely gluten-free then look in the gluten-free section in supermarkets for bread, but better still, go to a good health food shop and look at their gluten-free breads as these generally are less processed and taste a lot better too!

Fresh fruit salad - Cut up apple, melon, orange, pear, banana, mango, papaya and add grapes and fresh berries ... any or all of your favourite fruits. Add a little bit of lime or lemon juice, a couple of dollops of coconut yoghurt and sprinkle with chopped nuts and seeds. For variety try sprinkling some cinnamon, nutmeg or ginger. The antioxidants in fruits work hard to protect your body from aging and disease.

Fish paté or hummus with oat cakes – This is great for anyone who likes savoury options. Take the salmon or mackerel and blitz with some avocado, parsley and lemon juice. Oily fish provides essential fatty acids, plus high levels of vitamin E. Spread on 3-4 oat cakes and have with a handful of cherry tomatoes. If you are vegetarian, then use hummus rather than fish, but to make it more interesting, sprinkle with alfalfa or sprouted broccoli seeds. You can also blitz the hummus together with avocado and lemon, to make it more exciting.

Smoothies - These are the perfect breakfasts to take with you in a flask or travel mug. To make:



fruit of your choice – aim for a variety of colours and always use half a banana or some mango to help bind the smoothie, 2 tablespoons of oats (optional), water or non-dairy milk such as almond/oat/coconut milk, a handful of dark leafy green veg such as baby spinach/lambs lettuce (neither of these has a strong taste), 1 dessert spoon of flaxseed, 1 dessert spoon of almonds or a tbsp. of almond butter. Blend for a minute and drink.

For those of you who would rather just stick with the cereal routine, then go for more nutritious varieties.

Try the gluten-free options from health food shops, but check the label to make sure they aren't full of added sugars. Go for unsweetened dairy-free milks and slice a banana into the cereal, or have a grapefruit or another piece of fruit with your cereal.

But how do you find the time? You make the time. Get up 15 minutes earlier. Pack something to eat on the road or when you first get to work. Prepare it the night before if necessary. Alternatively learn where you can buy a healthy breakfast en route: Pret, M & S, Pod, Chop'd, Tossed, Crussh & Eat chains all sell porridge and fresh fruit, muesli, yogurt or fruit salad. Tossed and Crussh also sell Smoothies. Explore your area and find out what is available. You may be surprised.