Start the Day the Right Way - Have a Healthy Breakfast!

Breakfast provides your body & brain with fuel after an overnight fast; that's where the name originates - 'breaking the fast'!

Without breakfast you are effectively running on empty, like trying to start a car with no petrol!

Eating breakfast has many **health benefits** for us all, including:

- Improving brain function
- Reducing the risk of diabetes
- Reducing the risk of heart disease
- Helping maintain a healthy weight
- Reducing the risk of high blood pressure

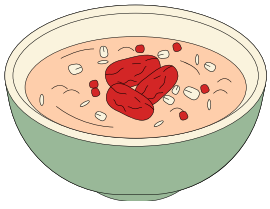
In addition, children who have a healthy, nutritious breakfast before school have been found to have improved reading, writing & maths results, and have better levels of concentration & behaviour!

What does a healthy breakfast look like?

Breakfast **cereals** are a quick and easy option. Many provide nutrients such as fibre, vitamins & minerals which are needed to keep our bodies healthy.

Try to aim for low sugar ones such as:

- Muesli
- Porridge
- Weetabix
- Shredded Wheat



Serving Suggestion

Add fresh or dried fruit (e.g. banana, berries or raisins) to your cereal for natural sweetness & to get one of your 5-a-day!

Top Tip!

For everyone over 5 years of age, **use semi-skimmed or skimmed milk** instead of whole milk as these have less fat yet are still full of vitamins & minerals including calcium which is needed for healthy teeth & bones.

Remember:

- *Usually 30g (one small bowl) of cereal is classed as a serving - but it is often tempting to have more! Be sure to watch your portion sizes.*
- *Avoid high sugar cereals such as frosted flakes (eg. Frosties) & chocolate covered ones (eg. Coco Pops).*
- *Even those cereals which may seem healthy (such as Bran Flakes or Granola) contain surprisingly high amounts of sugar. Make sure you check the nutritional label on the box.*

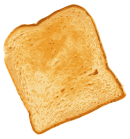
Other Options:

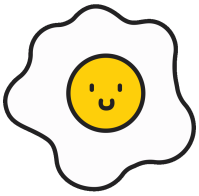
- **Toast** - another quick & easy breakfast!
  Remember, brown/wholemeal bread is healthier than white as it has more fibre. 50/50 is also a better option than white - yet it looks & tastes the same so the kids won't notice!
- **Crumpet or Bagel** - these are a healthy alternative too and make a nice change from toast.

- **Low-fat Natural Yoghurt or Greek Yoghurt** - you could add muesli, fruit, nuts or seeds for added taste & texture.

- **Eggs** - try them poached, boiled or scrambled, or why not make an omelette?

- **Pancakes** - they don't just have to be eaten on Pancake Day! Add fruit such as strawberries or blueberries or make them savoury by adding mushrooms or tomatoes - that way you'll be getting one of your 5-a-day too!





Serving Suggestion

Instead of using butter or margarine on your toast, why not try peanut butter, marmite, hummus, avocado or banana instead?

It's best to avoid sweet toppings like jam, marmalade & chocolate spread as these are full of sugar.

Top Tip!

Take care with **breakfast/cereal bars** - they can appear to be healthy but actually may contain high levels of fat & sugar *(e.g. one Eat Natural bar has 12g of fat and 16g of sugar!)*

Try to Avoid:

- Sweets, chocolate, biscuits, cakes & sweet pastries *(e.g. pain au chocolate).*

  We all like them but they are unhealthy & not suitable for a meal or snack as they have high levels of sugar & fat and have limited (or no) nutritional value. Save them for an occasional treat.

- Crisps, other salted snacks *(e.g. Pringles)* & savoury pastries *(e.g. sausage rolls).*

  These contain high amounts of fat & salt. Again, they should be saved as a treat and not eaten every day.

Drinks:

- **Water is always the best option.**
  It is hydrating, contains no sugar or calories, and is cheap!
  To make plain water more exciting, you could add ice, lemon or lime slices, cucumber or mint.

- **Milk** is the next best option. Again, stick to semi-skimmed or skimmed for anyone over 5 years of age.

- One small glass (150ml) of **fruit juice or smoothie** counts as one of your 5-a-day. However, although they have lots of vitamins & minerals, they also contain lots of sugar so just stick to one small glass a day.

- **Sugar free or diet fizzy** drinks are better than those with sugar in. However, many of them contain acids which are harmful to teeth so still need to be limited.

- **Energy drinks** *(e.g. Lucozade, Red Bull, Monster)* contain caffeine as well as lots of sugar and **are not suitable for children**.

For more information, top tips, fun facts & recipes ideas, check out our website:

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