

## February 2018-Breakfast Tips

"Eat your breakfast. It's the most important meal of the day!" Why are people always saying that? Well, imagine you're a car, after a long night of sleeping, your fuel tank is empty. Breakfast is the fuel that gets you going so you can hit the road. A Breakfast of any kind is better than no breakfast, but students should try not to have doughnuts or high sugar cereals all the time. They are high in calories, sugar, and fat. They also don't contain the nutrients kids really need to function at their potential. These foods contain empty calories that won't stay with a student so he will be hungry long before lunch. Just like with other meals, try to eat a variety of foods, including:

- fruits
- vegetables
- grains ( make at least half your grains whole grains)
- protein (meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dry beans, nuts, and seeds)
- dairy products ( low fat or fat-free milk, cheese, and yogurt)

### Ideas for Breakfast

First, the traditional ones:

- French toast, waffles, or pancakes (try wheat or whole-grain varieties)
- cold cereal and milk
- hot cereal, such as oatmeal or cream of wheat (try some dried fruit or nuts on top)
- whole-grain toast, bagel, or English muffin with cheese
- yogurt with fruit or nuts
- fruit smoothie, such as a strawberry smoothie
- eggs

Second, some different (but very good) ones:

- banana dog (peanut butter, a banana, and raisins in a long whole-grain bun)
- breakfast taco (shredded cheese on a tortilla, fold in half and microwave; top with salsa)
- country cottage cheese (apple butter mixed with cottage cheese)
- fruit and cream cheese sandwich (use strawberries or other fresh fruit)
- sandwich — grilled cheese, peanut butter and jelly, or another favorite
- leftovers (they're not just for dinner anymore!)

Lastly, some quick (out the door) ideas:

If you find yourself skipping breakfast because you're too rushed, try these quick breakfasts. They're easy to grab on the way out the door or can be prepared the night before:

- single servings of whole-grain, low-sugar cereal
- yogurt
- fresh fruit
- whole-grain muffin
- trail mix of nuts, dried fruits, pretzels, crackers, and dry cereal

Just in case you need more evidence that eating breakfast is the way to go, kids who don't eat breakfast are less able to learn at school, get less iron (an important nutrient) in their diets, and are more likely to have a higher body mass index (BMI), which is a sign they may be overweight.

On the other hand, kids who eat breakfast do better in school, are more likely to participate in physical activities, and tend to eat healthier overall. So tomorrow morning, don't run out the door on an empty stomach. Fuel up with a healthy breakfast!