

The logo for Weller Health Education Center features the word "Weller" in a large, bold, orange font with a stylized human figure inside the letter 'e'. Below it, "Health Education Center" is written in a smaller, orange font. The text is set against a white background with a large, curved orange shape behind it.

Weller

Health Education Center

Weller Health Tip for Kids: Ready, Set, Breakfast!

"Eat your breakfast. It's the most important meal of the day!" Why are parents 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.

What Should You Eat?

Any breakfast is better than no breakfast, but try not to have doughnuts or pastries all the time. They're high in calories, sugar, and fat. They also don't contain the nutrients a kid really needs. And if you have a doughnut for breakfast, you won't feel full for long.

Just like with other meals, try to eat a variety of foods, including:

- grains (breads and cereals)
- protein (meats, beans, and nuts)
- fruits and vegetables
- milk, cheese, and yogurt

Breakfast Ideas

First, the traditional ones:

- eggs
- 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

And now some weird (but yummy) ones:

- banana dog (peanut butter, a banana, and raisins in a long whole-grain bun)
- breakfast taco (shredded cheese on a tortilla, folded in half and microwaved; 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!)

Skipping Breakfast

Some kids skip breakfast because they sleep too late or because they think it's a way to stay thin. But skipping breakfast doesn't help people maintain a healthy weight. In fact, someone who skips breakfast tends to eat more calories throughout the day.

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

Need More Convincing?

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!

Follow this link to for a printable version:

http://kidshealth.org/PageManager.jsp?dn=Weller_Health_Education_Center&lic=127&ps=307&cat_id=119&article_set=10255

This information was provided by the Weller Health Education Center. For more medically reviewed health information written for parents, kids and teens, please visit www.wellercenter.org.

The Weller Health Education Center has been providing programs to schools for nearly 30 years to help children live healthier lives. Our program "Food Feud" specifically addresses the issues presented in this article. To learn more about this program or any of the 39 other programs we offer, please call us at 610-258-8500.

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