



FOR YOUTH DEVELOPMENT
FOR HEALTHY LIVING
FOR SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

QuickBites Tip

How can eating breakfast give me and my family an advantage?

What should we look for on the cereal and bar nutrition labels?

Breakfast gives us the energy we need to start the day. Sleep, exercise and breakfast are the best ways to recharge our batteries. If you skip breakfast, you will immediately be at a physical disadvantage before you even head out the door in the morning.

Studies suggest that eating breakfast improves brain function, particularly memory and recall, enabling adults to reach peak performance levels at work, and for children to succeed in school. Breakfast eaters have improved concentration levels and an improved ability to soak up knowledge. Research has shown that students who eat breakfast perform better academically. Not only does it rev up mental power, breakfast also alleviates that rumbly tummy which can be distracting.

For those who like to work-out early in the morning, breakfast gives them the opportunity to replenish their energy stores needed to tackle the rest of their day. Skipping meals, especially after exercise, can weaken our immunity due to a rise in cortisol levels associated with the stress fasting can put on the body. If you are planning a long or intense work-out, it is important to eat some carbohydrates before and then after the activity.

Breakfast provides an excellent opportunity to fuel up on high quality, nutrient dense foods. If you are careful with your choices, breakfast foods not only taste great, but also pack a powerful nutrition punch. Whole grains, fruits, low fat dairy, eggs, nuts and seeds all make good breakfast fare. Skipping breakfast can make it difficult to get the recommended amounts of fiber and other important nutrients in the daily diet.

Ready to eat breakfast cereals and bars can make a wholesome and fast breakfast choice. Add low fat yogurt or milk and some fruit and you have a balanced breakfast.

When shopping for a breakfast cereals and bars, look for these nutrients on the labels:

100-200 calories per serving.

2 or more (preferably more) grams of protein.

At least 3 grams of dietary fiber, preferably 5 or more grams.

Less than 3 grams of total fat (unless they contain nuts which will increase the fat grams, but in the form of healthy fats), less than 1 gram of saturated fat, and no trans fats.

8 grams of sugar or less per serving. (Cereals that include dried fruit will contain more sugars because the fruit sugar is counted as sugar. Bars will generally have a higher sugar content than cereals, opt for the lowest sugar choices.)

Between 10-25% of the Percent Daily Value for key vitamins and minerals.

Want to learn more?

Sign up for Personal Nutrition Training with Curwin Gett, MA RDN LDN

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