

WHY YOU SHOULD STOP SKIPPING Breakfast

Time-Saving Tips
to Entice the Most
Severe Offenders

Breakfast: Yep, it's still the most important meal of the day.

According to an International Food Information Council Foundation survey, 93 percent of you say breakfast is the most important meal of the day—yet it continues to be the meal most often skipped. As both a nutritionist and a mom, I have heard all of the reasons imaginable as to why one misses breakfast. Shortage of time and lack of hunger in the early hours of the day are the hurdles most often faced every morning. As I make my case for why eating breakfast should be a priority, I won't list all the reasons—



as I have so many times before—but instead, I'll recommend some flavor-filled, easy recipes and time-saving ideas that will hopefully entice even the most severe breakfast-skipping offenders. In addition, all the products I recommend are kid-approved. Thousands of young taste-testers—a group of growing boys and girls between the ages of 5 and 13 called the Kid Critics—have tried the products, and at least 70 percent have given them their stamp of approval.

The Morning Hustle

Mornings are rushed. You can set an alarm to shove yourself out of bed earlier, but who's willing to do that? Not me. Or, you can take a few minutes the night before to prepare your own version of a grab-'n'-go breakfast.

Overnight Oats, which are prepared by soaking oats and milk in a portable jar, have recently taken center stage for food bloggers. My family grew to love this simple concept; it's a fit-for-all breakfast recipe because you can personalize it with your favorite ingredients (nut butters, fruit, nuts or seeds, etc.). I recommend including Once Again Nut Butter—you can choose your favorite from their collection of almond, cashew, peanut, and sunflower butters to add protein, a heart-friendly fat, and a touch of sweetness. Naturipe is a dependable brand of berries; the company is committed to locally grown seasonal produce, and the berries come in portioned snack containers that are easily portable. For an extra protein, fiber, and omega boost, add a couple of tablespoons of Hemp Hearts from

Manitoba Harvest.

What kind of food expert would I be if I neglected to comment on cereal when discussing the breakfast subject? Cereal and cereal bars have all the makings to be the all-in-one approach to breakfast; however, their ingredient lists often start with refined carbohydrates, and their nutrient facts are usually too low in fiber, protein, and other brain-building nutrients. It's critical to feed the 100 billion neurons in the brain first thing in the morning—especially for kids. Children are little sponges by nature, but a breakfast void of brain-boosting nutrients makes it difficult for their minds to absorb all the new facts that will be thrown at them in class; they will grow frustrated and impatient with learning. Bitsy's Brainfood cereals are great options for this breakfast staple. These crunchy fruit and veggie cereals are certified organic and packed with brain-building vitamins; they are



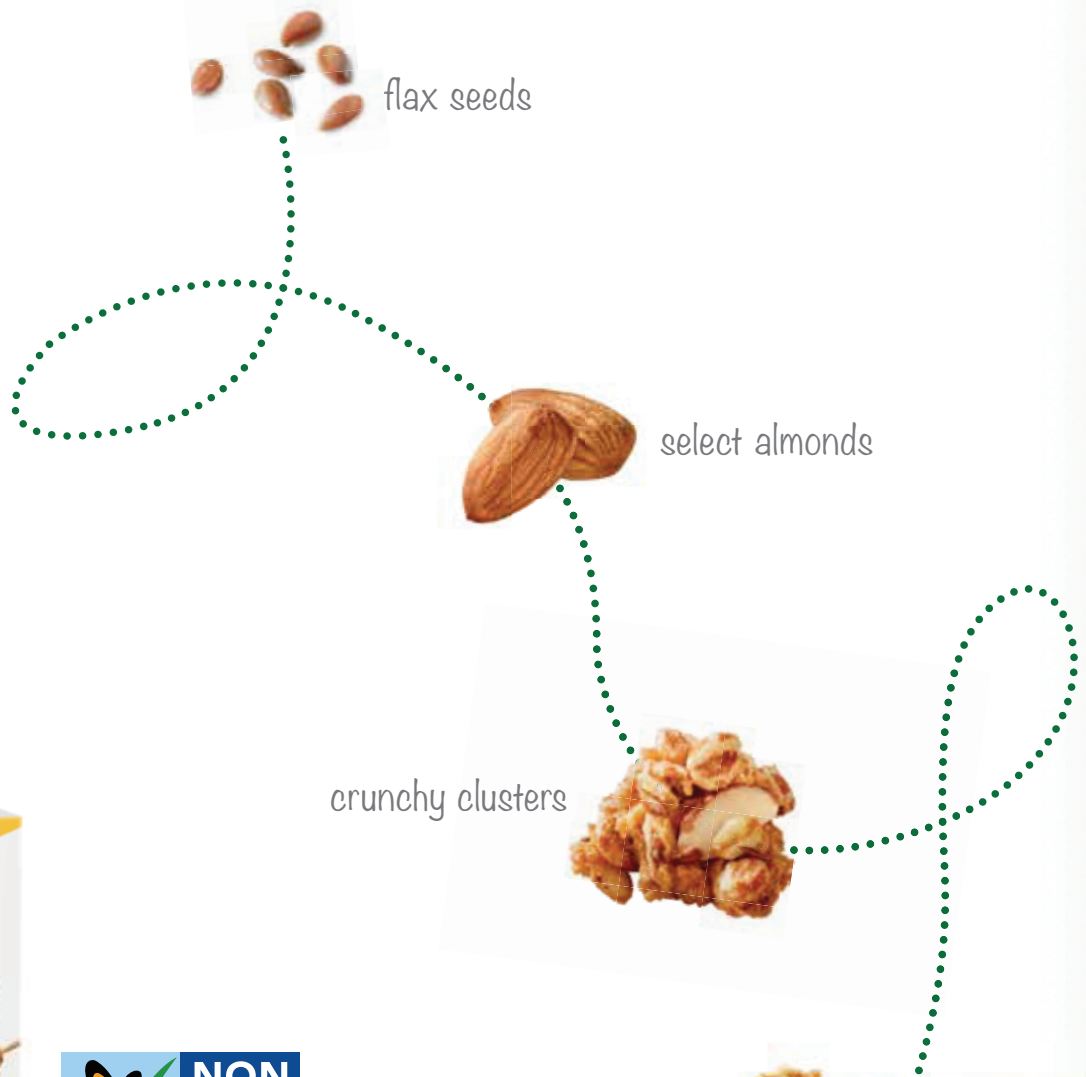
among the few healthy cereals found in gigantic grocery store cereal aisles. Barbara's Bakery line of Puffins cereals are also nutritious and delicious without the heaping spoonfuls of sugar and GMO ingredients found in others. For practical, small serving size cereal solutions—ideal for those who claim to have no appetite in the morning—try low sugar, whole grain granola. Upfront Foods makes single serve granola pouches that are great breakfast-grabbers and perfect for filling lunch boxes.

On-The-Go Preparation

Smoothies vs. juicing is one of my favorite food topics to debate. In a nutshell, I say smoothies win! They have more fiber, a wholesome beverage profile, and are usually lower in sugar per ounce. Because time constraints are a common issue in the morning routine—sleepy teenagers love using this excuse even though they're aware they need brain boosters—choosing ingredients and portioning them the



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food matters


night before is your solution. Simply put your smoothie ingredients in a container at dinnertime, cover, and freeze. The next morning, just throw the ingredients in the blender and voila! You've got breakfast. Here is the smoothie ingredients success formula: Combine at least three fruits with two vegetables, and top them with omega-filled seeds. Berries and bananas are some of the best smoothie ingredients because they add sweetness and antioxidant power. Green leaves, such as spinach and kale, work well for blending and will help you fill your vegetable quota of four or more servings per day. I must add that having a good blender is crucial; invest in one that will last.

Time-Saving Snack Tip:

Make a little more smoothie than needed for breakfast, fill up some popsicle molds, freeze them, and you'll be set for after school snacks.

To meet the nutrient demands of children's growing bodies—including their expanding brain mass—turn to Greek yogurt. Cabot Creamery's Greek-style yogurts, both vanilla and plain, should frequent your refrigerator; younger kids tend to gravitate toward this food because they love its smooth texture. Don't underestimate the versatility of yogurt! A spoonful placed on top of Overnight Oats will add yogurt's desirable mouth-feel, and it boosts this breakfast's protein and calcium value. Yogurt also serves as a thickener for smoothies. When making a breakfast sandwich, add a dollop on top to enrich the flavors. Yogurt toppings and food combinations are limitless. Kids can be creative when given the chance to make their own fun yogurt culinary choices; it helps them form taste bud preferences. Dips and fruit spreads make a good breakfast or snack too! Spread a yogurt-based dip on whole grain toast, or cut up some fruit to go with your dip.

For breakfast sandwiches, scramble eggs, add vegetables, and top them off with Cabot's Sharp Cheddar—a Kids Critic Approved cheese! Place the ingredients in a whole grain wrap, muffin, bread, or anything that allows you to toss it to your kids on their way out the door. Don't feel like eggs? Shelton's Premium Poultry makes a turkey sausage patty that prompted kids to beg for seconds and thirds at a Kid Critics taste-testing. Whenever shopping for breakfast sausage patties, stick with good, quality meat that has no artificial ingredients or preservatives, and low sodium.

Hopefully you are inspired to make your breakfast more interesting and fun. Perhaps these ideas have given you some new options. Keep your breakfast fresh and new each day, and avoid staying stuck on the same choices—mix it up! Every morning, begin the day by enjoying the benefits of the many vitamins, minerals, and macronutrients supplied by delicious, nutrient-packed foods. Power-up for a positively productive, satiating day! 

CAROLINA LIMA JANTAC, MS, RDN, LD, is a nutrition and social media manager, and an approved spokesperson for Kid Critics. She has years of experience in nutritional counseling in both private and clinical settings. Learn more about Carolina and Kid Critics at kidcritics.com.

MORE ONLINE!

Want more time-saving tips? Visit naturalsolutionsmag.com and type "breakfast" in the search bar to discover more reasons to eat this meal.

Black beans
get nutrition rolling.



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