

BREAKFAST at HOME

We've all heard that *"breakfast is the most important meal of the day,"* often from our moms and grandmothers. After years of scientific research, it turns out that they were actually on to something important.

For kids, eating in the morning is essential for optimal school performance and overall health. Kids (and adults) who eat breakfast tend to do better at school (and work) - and to have healthier weights and cholesterol levels as well.

PLAN

To **refuel** and **rev-up** your family for an energetic day, plan a power breakfast. For most people, time is the biggest obstacle to eating in the morning. Here are three tried-and-true tips for beating the breakfast rush hour:

Get ready the night before: Set the table with bowls and spoons for cereal. Get out a pan for pancakes or a blender for smoothies. Slice up some fruit and cheese.

Keep it real simple: Fancy breakfasts are wonderful when you have the time. On busy days, a sandwich, a slice of leftover pizza, or a yogurt with fruit work just fine.

Pack it to-go: If there's no time to eat at home, take your nutrition to-go. Pack a brown bag breakfast for the road -- or see if your school offers a breakfast program.

EAT

CARBOHYDRATE: A high-octane carbohydrate energizes your body and brain for a busy day. Think cereal (hot or cold), bread, muffins, rolls, tortillas, or even leftover pasta. Choose whole grains for an extra nutrition punch (more fiber and nutrients).

PROTEIN: This is the missing link in most morning meals. Protein is what we need to go strong until lunch. Think lean: a slice of Canadian bacon, an egg, a slice of deli meat or cheese, a container of yogurt, a scoop of cottage cheese, or a handful of nuts.

FRUIT: Breakfast is a great way to start on the 5 to 9 daily servings of produce your body needs for optimal health. Think fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruit – like apples, avocados, bananas, berries, grapefruit, kiwi, mangoes, oranges, pears, or pineapple.

ENJOY

Skipping breakfast is a no-brainer – literally. Skip breakfast – and your brain and body suffer all day. Eat well in the AM and you're on the nutrition fast track for a high-energy day. Give kids what they crave – a power breakfast every day.