

Breakfast - Fuel to Start Your Day

“I am not hungry when I wake up,” or “I don’t have time for breakfast,” are common excuses people use for not eating breakfast, but it may be something they need to reconsider.

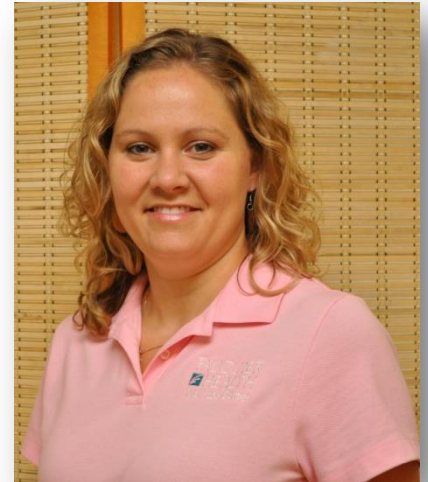
Studies show that people who consistently eat breakfast within an hour of waking weigh less than their peers. This is true for all ages, from adolescence through adulthood. “Breaking the fast” by fueling your body with food helps jump start your metabolism so that you can burn calories more efficiently. It also helps with concentration and performance at your job or in the classroom.

Sometimes it takes time to get into the breakfast habit, especially if you have skipped it for most of your life. Just start with something small like a piece of fruit, glass of milk or a few crackers to get you started. Gradually add more as your body gets into a routine. The goal is a balance of protein, carbohydrates and fat for the most staying power till lunch. If you initially eat a small breakfast, plan to have another breakfast or mid-morning snack a few hours later. Some great breakfast options are:

- peanut butter on toast
- fruit and cottage cheese
- Greek yogurt with granola
- oatmeal with walnuts
- eggs and toast
- trail mix

People often ask how many meals they should eat a day and which one should be the largest. For weight management and healthy eating, the best approach is to spread your calories evenly throughout the day in at least three to four meals or snacks.

Gauge your fullness to where you should be hungry again within three to four hours. Avoid letting your body get to its hunger point as this often leads to overeating during your next meal. A good example of how eating once daily slows your metabolism is the way sumo wrestlers eat. They wake up and go to the gym on an empty stomach. They finish their day with a high-calorie dinner followed immediately by bed. Unfortunately the fast-paced business world has many Americans eating like sumo-wrestlers, so remember to take time and plan your meals. It will save you time, energy and calories.



Registered Dietitian Aren Dodge explains the importance of breakfast.

**For more information or to schedule
an appointment with Registered Dietitian
Aren Dodge, call 540-316-2652.**