

NUTRITION NEWS

A FRESH PERSPECTIVE ON HEALTH AND WELLNESS

BeWell

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Beginning with Breakfast – Start the School Year Off Right with a Balanced Breakfast

It is hard to believe yet another school year is almost upon us! As we prepare for another successful year in the classroom, it is important to remember the role that proper nutrition plays in our abilities to succeed in the classroom.

Breakfast has always been known as one of the most important meals of the day, and this still holds true! Breakfast not only helps us “jump start” our metabolism, but also helps provide us the fuel we need to get through those groggy mornings and hold us over until lunch time. Mornings can be rushed as we try to squeeze in that last minute of sleep before heading out the door. However after an average eight hours of sleep your body is in need of energy to propel you through the morning.

Whether you grab a banana to eat on the way or have time for a full meal it is important to eat something. Eating breakfast before school or at school is a great opportunity to fuel your body and brain for the first part of your day - and also a great time to socialize with friends

before heading to class. The National School Breakfast Program requires schools offer students a breakfast of whole grains, fruit (which can include half the fruit as 100% fruit juice), and milk to fuel your brain and help you concentrate in class.

Numerous studies have shown that students perform better in the classroom when they eat a regular breakfast. Just like doing homework and studying for an exam will help you perform better, the same goes for eating breakfast daily. When a breakfast balanced with complex carbohydrates, healthy fats, and lean proteins is consumed, our metabolism is fueled and we are less likely to have that dreaded mid-day crash. Eating a regular breakfast has also been shown to help maintain a healthy weight by stabilizing blood sugars throughout the day. Lastly, eating breakfast encourages our body and brain to select healthier food choices throughout the day and snack less on foods that are not nutrient-dense.

Struggling to think of what to have for breakfast? It can be a very simple on-the-go meal, or a creative dish with new flavors. Breakfast meals from around the world can inspire fun alternative healthy breakfast options. A typical breakfast in Israel consists of a chopped veggie salad, cheese, or other traditional breakfast foods such as yogurt, hummus, pita bread, and avocados. A typical Chinese breakfast may consist of a dumpling filled with vegetable or meat and a side of soymilk tea. A meal from the south, specifically Venezuela, may consist of a baked-from-scratch corn flour bread called Arepas (also gluten-free), side of beef, black beans, low fat cheese, avocados, and fresh fruit juice.

Regardless of what you choose for breakfast, aim to eat within the first hour of waking up. Most importantly keep in mind that eating *something* is better than eating nothing at all. Once breakfast becomes part of your daily routine, your body will adjust and you will start to notice the benefits both physically and mentally.



Breakfast Banana Split

INGREDIENTS

- 1 Banana
- ½ Cup Plain Greek Yogurt
- ½ Cup Fresh Berries
- ¼ Cup Granola

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash and slice fresh berries. Consider using blueberries, blackberries, strawberries, raspberries, or a mix!
2. Split banana in half, lengthwise.
3. Scoop yogurt onto banana in 2-3 dollops.
4. Top with sliced berries and granola.

Nutrition Facts (1 serving): 276 kcal 2g Fat 0g Sat Fat 6mg Chol 106 mg Sodium 45g Carb 5 g Fiber 15g Protein