



CENTRE COUNTY PREVENTION COALITION
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February 2009 – A Nutritious Start Every Day

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Research shows that children who eat breakfast fare better in school and have a healthier diet, says Sheah Rarback, M.S., R.D., a pediatric dietician at the University of Miami School of Medicine.

Do you remember hearing “breakfast is the most important meal of the day?” Well, your mother was right. Unfortunately, for many of us, our busy lives rarely present time for healthy family breakfasts even though the benefits of eating breakfasts are well documented. These include:

- *Improved memory and attention span
- *Helps keep weight under control
- *Helps maintain a better mood during the day
- *Improves classroom performance and test scores
- *Increases children’s ability to focus and concentrate on school work
- *Decreases behavior problems, tardiness and visits to the school nurse
- *Increases attendance rates

Since lack of time in the morning has been shown to be the main reason parents and children skip breakfast, listed below are some ideas for quick, nutritious kid-pleasers:

- *Toasted bagel with cheese
- *Fruit-filled breakfast bar
- *Peanut butter on whole wheat toast
- *Granola bar
- *Yogurt with granola topping
- *Smoothie: Slice up a banana the night before and freeze the slices overnight. In the morning, place the banana slices in the blender along with a cup of low-fat milk, a container of yogurt and a couple drops of vanilla extract. Blend until creamy, place in a “to go” cup and enjoy!
- *Croissant filled with favorite sandwich meats and cheeses. Microwave for a quick, hot breakfast sandwich.
- *Check to see if your school offers a breakfast program. School breakfast supplies ¼ of the Recommended Daily Allowances your child needs. It’s easy, convenient and affordable. A wide variety of foods are served and it meets USDA requirements. Eating breakfast at school also eliminates arguing with children who say they are not hungry when they first wake up.

It might be the last thing on your morning to-do list. Or it might not be on your list at all. But a healthy breakfast refuels your body and jump-starts your day. So don't overlook this important meal.

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