



Tips for a Better Breakfast

Plan ahead. Mornings can be rough, but a little planning the night before can go a long way. Cut up fruit and place it in food storage containers in the fridge. If you're baking, make a big batch at the beginning of the week and then freeze or refrigerate the leftovers for quick access. Set the table before you go to bed.

Pack it up. No time for a sit-down breakfast? Pack a breakfast just as you would a lunch. Try making breakfast sandwiches on whole wheat toast, or bags of trail mix with fruits and nuts to give to your kids in the car. A great breakfast 'trail mix' can include a whole-grain / low-sugar cereal like Cheerios, bite-sized Mini-Wheats, or Original Fiber One.

Include your kids. If you have time, let your kids help prepare breakfast to increase the chance of them actually eating it.

Get back to basics. Traditional breakfasts of eggs and toast may seem like a thing of the past, but the protein in eggs make them a great option for breakfast. Additionally, 100% whole wheat bread contains fiber and other beneficial nutrients. If you're pressed for time, you can scramble an egg with a splash of milk and cook it in the microwave.

Think seasonally. Fruit can be a great addition to any breakfast, whether you serve it cut up as a side option, add it to whole wheat pancakes, or cook it with hot cereal. If you really want your kids to enjoy the fruit, try to buy those fruits that are in season. They taste better and typically cost less as well.

Be creative. Create smoothies from fresh or frozen fruit. Cook up breakfast sandwiches using leftover veggies and meats from last night's dinner. Decorate oatmeal with shapes and faces using raisins and oatmeal. Keep it interesting so that your kids stay interested in eating.

Search online. Running out of breakfast ideas? There are numerous websites with recipe ideas, blogs directed at moms and dads, and healthy living ideas. Aim to try one new recipe every week or two to keep things interesting. Keep favorite recipes bookmarked for easy access.

Take note. If your kids won't eat something, ask them why. It may be something easily solvable like a texture or size issue. For example, if your kids won't eat a whole banana, try cutting it up. You can also try mashing it into oatmeal or serving it on whole grain toast and a sprinkle of cinnamon with a glass of milk.

Pay attention. No matter what you're serving your kids, pay attention to the added sugar and sodium. Your kid's breakfast should be full of protein, fiber, vitamins and minerals to get them ready for the day. Steer clear of "breakfast foods" full of added sugar and sodium.

The Yale Rudd Center for Food Policy and Obesity has other resources about marketing cereals to children.

For more information go to: www.cerealfacts.org