

Breakfast

Main objectives: To demonstrate the importance of breakfast for good health as brainstorm ways to ensure every day starts with this most important meal. The topic of what makes a healthy breakfast should center on the concept that a healthy meal is designed the same way, whether breakfast, lunch or dinner. In this sense, all of the concepts learned in other lessons apply.

Essential Discussion Topics:

- *Why breakfast is important.* Ask the class what they think the benefits of eating breakfast are. Important points to highlight are:
 - Eating breakfast kick starts your morning and gives you the energy to start your day.
 - Breakfast helps you do better in school by improving concentration and keeps you from feeling overly hungry throughout the morning so you can make it to lunch feeling better.
- *Obstacles to eating breakfast every day.* Ask the students to list reasons why it may be difficult to eat breakfast every day. Not enough time? Do not enjoy breakfast foods? Not hungry that early in the morning? Ask the students to brainstorm ideas for how to make breakfast a regular part of every morning. Ideas can include preparation the night before (making the breakfast, setting out the ingredients, packaging them to take on the go), buying on the go options, waking up 5 minutes earlier, trying more non-traditional breakfast options that they may enjoy better. Have students brainstorm some on the go breakfast options.
 - Toss some cereal in a bag to eat on the road
 - Whole wheat toast or English muffin with peanut butter
 - Yogurt (Greek yogurt has lots of protein!) with fruit or granola
 - There are many whole grain cereal and granola bars on the market
 - Fresh fruit is naturally packaged to go!

Supplemental Discussion Topics:

- *What makes a good breakfast?* Ask the class what they typically eat for breakfast. Ask them what they think would be a healthy breakfast. The basis of this idea should be that the same foods that make any meal healthy should be incorporated into breakfast – such as whole grains, fruits and veggies, protein, healthy fats. Remind the students that the Healthy Eating Plate can be used for every meal of the day. Breakfast shouldn't only be thought of as traditional 'breakfast foods'.
 - Fruits and Vegetables: Fruits can be eaten on their own and added to cereal or yogurt. Veggies can be added to scrambled eggs and omelets.
 - Whole Grains: Look at the ingredient list. Choose bread or cereal that has a whole grain listed as the first ingredient. It is important to look at the nutrition facts label for cereals, especially, because their nutritional value is highly variable. Remember to pay attention to the serving size. Try to choose a cereal with <10g of sugar. Look for >2g of fiber.
 - Protein: Protein keeps you fuller longer, helping you make it to lunch without snacking on junk food. Eggs are a great source of protein for the morning, along

with yogurt. Traditional breakfast meats like bacon and sausage are full of saturated fat and should be eaten in moderation.

- Drinks: Try to limit the amount of sugary drinks! Whole fruit juices (like orange juice) are good, but should be consumed in moderation. Milk is a good source of calcium, which is important for young people to build strong bones. There are many types of milk, try to choose lower-fat options. There are also alternatives to cows milk, which have many of the same nutrients.

Activities:

- *Cereal, the go to breakfast choice.* Pass out empty cereal boxes to the class. Have students follow along with their box while you review how to read a nutrition label and many of the topics discussed in previous lessons.
 - Pay attention to the serving size – remind students of the Healthy Eating Plate Lesson activity
 - Choose a cereal with <10g of sugar – have the class discuss which cereals are below 10 and which are above
 - Choose a cereal with >2g of fiber – have the class discuss which cereals have fiber
 - Look for whole grains in the ingredient list
 - Review the different types of milk. Lower-fat options are generally better choices. Remind the class about healthy and unhealthy fats – do the fats in milk come from an animal or plant? Does this make the fat healthy or unhealthy? Discuss other types of milk people drink instead of cows milk (soy milk, for example).
 - Add fruit to the top to add important vitamins and minerals

Snack Ideas:

- *PB&J Waffle-wich.* Toast whole grain frozen waffles. Cut each waffle in half. Spread one half with peanut butter. Then layer with sliced strawberries (less sugar than jelly). Top with other waffle half to make a sandwich.
- *Breakfast Burritos.* Wrap scrambled eggs, black beans, sautéed bell peppers, salsa and small amount of shredded cheese in small whole-wheat tortillas for a portable, satisfying option. Would need to bring a hot plate to prepare or pre-make the burritos just before and keep warm.