

Nurses' Nook...The Importance of Eating Breakfast

Breakfast really is important especially for children and teenagers. It gets its name from being the meal that breaks the "fast" of being without food all night. When people awake in the morning their blood sugar is probably at its lowest of the entire day. Having a nutritious breakfast can jumpstart metabolism and help get muscles and brain working. Studies have shown that children and teens who eat breakfast generally do better in school overall. The student who skips breakfast is more likely to be tired or cranky or unable to concentrate during the school day.

Having a meal that includes both carbohydrates (breads, fruits, and cereals), some protein (milk, yogurt, nut butters) and some fiber (whole grain products) will provide the longest lasting nutrition to your child, helping him or her to feel well until lunch time. In addition it is an opportunity for children to take in important vitamins and minerals.

Admittedly it is difficult to get a healthy breakfast into kids in the morning when everyone is rushing to get out of the house but here are some tips for success:

- Keep the kitchen stocked with healthy breakfast options (fresh fruit, whole grain, low sugar cereals, yogurt, eggs, peanut butter, whole grain waffles, etc.)
- Let young children help plan breakfast
- Cut up fruit and get utensils and bowls ready the night before
- Get everyone up 10 minutes earlier
- Have a grab and go option in case someone is late, such as trail mix, a bag of low fat, low sugar cereal, a yogurt with fruit, or a peanut butter/banana sandwich.
(kidshealth.org, 2015)

As always you are welcome to call the nurse in your child's school with any questions or concerns.