

GOOD BREAKFAST GUIDE

A GUIDE TO HEALTHY BREAKFASTS FOR SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN

Why is breakfast important for school-aged children?



Studies show that healthy breakfasts can benefit children’s diet quality, body weight and and can support learning.

Many school-aged children skip breakfast.

Missing out on a nutritious breakfast can make it harder for children and young people to get enough of the nutrients they need.



WHAT DOES A GOOD BREAKFAST PROVIDE?

Nutrient	Function	Examples
Carbohydrate	Provides energy to support growth, activity, learning and development after the overnight fast	Starchy foods like cereals and breads
Protein	Needed for healthy muscles and for bone development in children	Beans, eggs, milk, yogurt, cheese
Fibre	Important for a healthy gut and for long-term health	Wholegrain cereals, wholemeal breads, fruit, vegetables, beans
B vitamins	Help release energy from food and support the nervous system	Fortified breakfast cereals, milk, yogurt
Vitamin C	Helps support the immune and nervous system and important for healthy skin	Fruit (e.g. citrus and berries) and some vegetables (e.g. tomatoes and peppers)
Calcium	Needed for growth and development of bones in children	Milk, cheese and yogurt. If serving plant-based versions, choose those fortified with calcium
Iodine	Needed for cognitive function and healthy growth in children	Milk, cheese, yogurt and eggs
Iron	Needed for cognitive development in children and for healthy red blood cells	Fortified breakfast cereals, wholemeal breads, dried fruit
Zinc	Needed for cognitive function, healthy skin and to support the immune system	Wholegrain breakfast cereals, wholemeal breads

WHAT MAKES A GOOD BREAKFAST?

Starchy foods (wholegrain where possible)

- Lower-sugar breakfast cereals, ideally wholegrain and higher fibre
- Porridge or oats
- Bread or toast – ideally wholemeal or 50/50
- Bagels, rolls or pitta breads – ideally Wholemeal or 50/50



Fruit and vegetables

- Bananas
- Apples
- Oranges/easy peelers
- Berries (fresh or frozen)
- Canned fruit, in juice not syrup
- Dried fruit such as raisins, apricots or prunes
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber
- Vegetable sticks, e.g. pepper or carrot



Protein and dairy

- Milk
- Yogurts and fromage frais (lower or no added sugar)
- Reduced fat soft cheese
- Baked beans
- Eggs



Drinks

- Water
- Milk
- If providing plant-based milk alternatives, choose unsweetened ones that are fortified with calcium



Fruit juice should be kept to 1 small glass a day. Water and milk are best at breakfast.

Limit/avoid sugary cereals, cakes, pastries, jams, sugar, honey, syrups and juice drinks.

Consider food allergies and cultural, religious or vegan diets. Check labels for food allergens.

Present food well and serve in clean, calm and attractive surroundings.

- Wholemeal bagel with reduced fat soft cheese and sliced fruit
- Wholegrain cereal with sliced banana, raisins and milk
- Wholemeal toast with baked beans and sliced pepper
- Wholemeal roll with sliced boiled egg, cherry tomatoes and orange segments
- Porridge or overnight oats with frozen berries or dried fruit
- One pan shakshuka with canned beans, chopped tomatoes, peppers and eggs
- Scrambled eggs or omelette with mushrooms, sweetcorn and wholemeal toast
- Baked oats made with fresh or dried fruit



Some examples of healthy breakfasts

