

## Healthy Breakfast Planning

By Andrea Holwegner BSc, RD

When it comes to breakfast most of us aren't getting the healthy start we need. Studies show that people who eat a balanced breakfast have lower BMIs, consume less fat throughout the day, perform better at work or school and meet the daily recommendations for fruits and vegetables, calcium and fibre.



But many Canadians skip the most important meal of the day on a regular basis. And even those who do make the time, may not be getting the right balance of protein and carbohydrates in the morning.

Registered Dietitian Andrea Holwegner has these suggestions to ensure your day begins with a healthy, nutritious and balanced breakfast.

"Breakfast is critical to "break the fast" and kick start the metabolism so that you are burning calories efficiently through the day," she says. "Breakfast also boosts your energy and brainpower to think clearly and focus and concentrate. Eating breakfast is helpful to help manage a healthy weight since those that skip breakfast often end up overeating later. I call this "rebound" hunger."

**She suggests aiming for the following 3 components at breakfast:**

- Grains/starches such as oatmeal, high-fibre cereal, whole grain toast etc.
- Fruits/veggies such as fresh fruit, veggies added to an omelette, unsweetened juice, frozen berries, applesauce etc.
- Source of protein such as nut butters, eggs, cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt, milk, meat, nuts/seeds.

Holwegner also warns against too much of one thing.

"People should avoid meals that contain only carbohydrates and no protein. Meals that have only carbs such as toast and a glass of juice will give the brain good energy but since carbs are quick to digest, this meal will only keep you full and sustained with energy for a short time.





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Adding protein to this meal such as nut butter or a tall glass of milk will help sustain fullness longer," she offers.

In the same vein, she also suggests avoiding carbs altogether. "A veggie omelette is a good start but since eggs are mostly protein and veggies are very low in calories you don't have carbohydrates to fuel the brain and may find that your energy levels take a hit. Add some toast or another source of carbohydrate to this meal to feel both full and energetic," she says.

### **Andrea's healthy breakfast picks:**

- Oatmeal with raisins and a glass of milk/soy milk
- High-fibre bran based breakfast cereal with milk/soy milk and an apple
- Toast, eggs and tomato slices
- Yogurt parfait: yogurt, frozen berries topped with cereal

### **Speedy breakfast picks to eat on the go:**

- Spread peanut butter or other nut butter on a pita and roll around a banana
- Smoothie made with banana, frozen berries and yogurt in a "to-go" mug with a granola bar on the side
- Container with trail mix and added dry cereal

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*Andrea Holwegner, known as the Chocoholic Dietitian, is founder and president of Health Stand Nutrition Consulting Inc., a member of the Canadian Association of Professional Speakers and a media expert for the Dietitians of Canada. For nutrition counselling information and to sign up for a free monthly newsletter loaded with nutrition tips, recipes and more visit [www.healthstandnutrition.com](http://www.healthstandnutrition.com). Twitter @chocoholicRD.*

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