

Questions and Answers about Breakfast and Snacks

We never have time for breakfast. Is it really that important?

Eating breakfast helps children and adults concentrate better. Children do better in school when they eat breakfast. Try some time-saving strategies. Set the table or put the cereal box on the table the night before. If you want a heartier breakfast, such as pancakes, measure the dry ingredients in a bowl the night before and add the wet ingredients in the morning.

Many schools have breakfast programs that provide a balanced meal to fuel children for learning. Check if your local school does.

We have so many snack foods to choose from. How do I choose healthy snacks that fit my budget?

Fruits and vegetables always are healthy choices. For boxed snacks, be a comparison shopper and get the most nutritional value for your money.

Read Nutrition Facts labels. Use "Percent Daily Value" when you compare foods. A food with 5 percent or less of the daily value is considered "low" in that nutrient. A food product with 20 percent or more of the daily value is considered "high" in that nutrient. Ask yourself these questions:

- What is the serving size? How many calories does a serving provide?
- How much saturated fat and trans fat do the snacks contain? These types of fat aren't heart-healthy.
- Does the snack contain fiber?
- How do the snacks compare in vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C and iron?

Sometimes buying a larger box saves money, but people tend to eat more if they have the whole box in front of them. Pack individual portions in plastic bags to help with portion control.

I'm trying to lose some weight. Will skipping breakfast help?

Skipping breakfast may lead to overeating later in the day. Breakfast skippers usually more than make up for the 300 or so calories skipped in the morning. Enjoy foods from two or three food groups, such as a fruit, milk and grain, for breakfast.

My kids are always snacking! Isn't this bad for them?

Growing children need snacks. Well-chosen snacks add variety to the diet and keep children – and adults – fueled for school or work. Children's stomachs are smaller, so they need to eat more frequently. Eating smaller, more frequent meals is a good idea for adults, too.

Visit www.ag.ndsu.edu/foodwise for more information.

This material was funded in part by USDA's Food Stamp Program. The Food Stamp Program provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more contact your county Social Services office or call 1-800-755-2716.

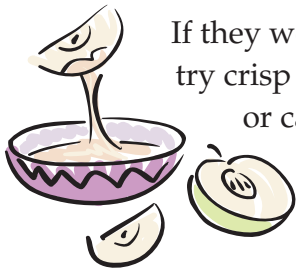
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We are trying to have more family meals, but our evenings are so busy.

What can we do?

A family meal doesn't have to happen in the evening. Be flexible with the time and the place. How about a family breakfast? Would an evening snack work? How about a Saturday brunch?

My grandchildren ask me for chips and soda pop when they visit me after school. That's not very healthy! Any ideas?



If they would like something crunchy, try crisp apples with low-fat fruit dip or carrot sticks with low-fat ranch dip.



Consider making fruit smoothies as a nutritious alternative to soda pop. Combine fruit juice, yogurt and fresh, canned or frozen fruit in a blender (or with a mixer) and pour into cups.

Have them help prepare the snacks, and they're more likely to eat them, too.

Breakfast Burrito

- 1 15-oz. can vegetarian refried beans
- 2 Tbsp. chopped onion
- ½ c. chopped tomatoes
- 4 tortillas, corn or wheat
- ½ c. salsa
- Low-fat shredded cheese (optional)

Mix beans with onion and tomatoes. Microwave tortillas for 15 seconds. Divide bean mixture among the tortillas. Fold each tortilla to enclose filling. Place on microwave-safe dish and spoon salsa over each burrito. Microwave on high for 15 seconds. If desired, sprinkle with cheese.

Makes four servings. Without cheese, each serving has 170 calories, 2.5 grams (g) fat, 30 g carbohydrate, 7 g fiber and 15 percent of the daily value for vitamin C.

Menu Idea: Breakfast Burrito, orange slices and low-fat milk

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Contact the local office of the
NDSU Extension Service
for more information
on food and nutrition or
managing your food dollar.

