

## Are You a Breakfast Skipper?

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Do you get up in the morning, drag to the coffee pot, and then to work? Do you pull into a fast food restaurant or convenience store to get something that is high in sugar and/or high in fat to get through the morning? As parents, we try to get the children to eat something because we were taught that breakfast is the “most important meal of the day”. When our children see us as bad examples, they follow right along. Does any of this sound familiar?

Eating breakfast does many things such as refueling the body. Many people eat dinner and maybe a bedtime snack and then go to bed. The body does not get any food for many hours during the night. This break without food is longer if the evening meal was skipped for some reason. Breakfast provides the glucose that is the primary energy source of the body and the brain. The brain’s functions are very sensitive to changing glucose levels. Research has shown that missing breakfast diminishes the mental performance. Breakfast skippers often feel tired, restless, and irritable in the morning (American dietetic Association, 2004). This can affect attitudes and production levels at school, work, or with any activities.

Eating breakfast may also help in weight management because it reduces hunger and prevents eating binges. Studies by researchers at the Harvard Medical School reveal that people who eat a daily breakfast are less likely to become obese

as compared to those who skip the meal. A common complaint is that eating breakfast gives a feeling of hunger about mid-morning. That is because the body is working and digesting food received at the early meal. The metabolism is working properly burning calories and delivering nutrients. When a routine of eating breakfast is established, this mid-morning hunger will usually go away. If the meal has some fat and protein which stay in the stomach longer, that may help as well.

To help break the habit of skipping breakfast, one may need to get up a bit earlier. This is probably not a welcomed tip but many people are skipping simply because there is not enough time in the morning. Children need enough time as well to help with the morning rush. We cannot expect our young ones to develop good time management if we don’t practice it ourselves. For years we have promoted dinner time as a time to go over the day and communicate with each other. Breakfast can be a time to plan the day and organize activities.

Remember that breakfast is important because our lives have become very active, complicated, and competitive. Our bodies need healthy, routine, nourishment to keep up with daily activities at an optimal level.

