

# Start Your Kids' Day Right With a Healthy Breakfast

(StatePoint) You've probably heard the saying, breakfast is the most important meal of the day. While there is some conflicting research that questions the importance of eating breakfast for weight loss, many other researchers conclude there are, in fact, many benefits for starting your day with a morning meal.

Briana Rodriguez, a registered dietitian with Jenny Craig, offers the inside scoop on breakfast and why there is still truth in that old saying, especially for those trying to improve their health.

"Breakfast literally means breaking the fast," Rodriguez explains. "Blood sugar, also known as glucose, powers your muscles and brain. After seven-to-nine hours of sleep, blood sugar is naturally low and you need to replenish your energy stores."

But what if there is no time to spare in the morning?

Rest assured, there are quick, easy breakfasts you can grab on-the-go.

## Why Breakfast Matters

Although skipping meals or eating very little in the morning may seem like a sure-fire way to lose weight, Rodriguez explains it is not so simple.

"When you skip breakfast, you will likely overcompensate later, eating your largest meal at night because you are extremely hungry. And that is not good if your intention is weight loss.

Making breakfast your largest meal of the day, also known as front-loading, can lead to a healthier weight.

"Since digestion slows during sleep, late-night calories are less easily metabolized and will likely be stored instead of used as energy," Rodriguez explains. "A balanced, substantial breakfast works with your metabolism at its peak, helping support weight loss efforts naturally."

An added bonus? Weight loss isn't the only potential benefit of having a good breakfast; a 2013 study published on obesity suggests other health gains in addition to weight loss, such as decreased risk of

heart disease and Type 2 diabetes.

The quality of food you eat also matters. Here is an example of what Rodriguez suggests a typical day look like:

- Breakfast and lunch should be satisfying, protein-rich and include a small amount of healthy fats and carbohydrates.

*Think: an egg and veggie scramble with a piece of fruit for breakfast or chicken with veggies and pasta alongside a green salad for lunch.*

- Dinner should be light and include a lean protein and lots of non-starchy vegetables as options. Rodriguez suggests decreasing carbs in the evening.

*Think: meat loaf with veggies or something like Jenny Craig's Three Cheese Macaroni with Broccoli and Carrots.*

- Snacks are an important part of the equation too. Rodriguez recommends snacks under 200 calories, spaced between meals. Choose something with protein and fiber to help keep you feeling full.

*Think: a small apple with a teaspoon of nut butter, or nonfat Greek yogurt with a handful of berries.*

Consider weight loss programs that embrace the science around the body's natural circadian rhythm, such as Jenny Craig's newest program, Rapid Results, to help optimize metabolism and accelerate weight loss. Also, look for programs that offer satisfying breakfasts with just the right amount of proteins, carbohydrates and fats. The Jenny Craig program offers over 20 chef-crafted, nutritionist-designed breakfast items. For more information, or to book a free appointment with a personal weight loss consultant, visit the website [jennycraig.com](http://jennycraig.com).

Eating breakfast may improve your health in more ways than one. The next time you're rushing out the door in the morning, don't forget to grab something good to eat – your body will thank you!



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