

# the breakfast club

## BREAKFAST TIPS + TRICKS FOR KIDS

How to keep  
breakfast  
healthy,  
within budget  
and fun!



BREAKFAST FOR  
LEARNING

## BACK-TO-SCHOOL SPECIAL

- Keeping kids hydrated
- Great recipes
- Down and dirty cleaning tips
- Get crafty

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# The importance of breakfast



**B**reakfast is the most important meal of the day, and making healthy choices in the morning can help ensure your kids have the energy they need for the day ahead.

Investing in a nutritious breakfast will not only give kids positive health benefits, but it will also help to teach them about the importance of healthy eating and lay a foundation for a healthy future.

Below are the top reasons why we should invest in a nutritious breakfast for ourselves and our kids.

- ✔ Breakfast kick-starts your metabolism after a night's sleep and helps keep your energy up throughout the morning.
- ✔ Children who eat breakfast generally have higher math grades and reading scores, have greater attention spans and better behaviour – as well as fewer emotional issues – than kids who go without breakfast.
- ✔ Eating breakfast significantly increases daily dietary fibre intake, and provides more protective vitamins and minerals.
- ✔ Investing in good nutrition helps to teach our children how to stay slim and healthy by eating good foods and being physically active.

## ABOUT BREAKFAST FOR LEARNING

Breakfast for Learning is the leading national nonprofit organization dedicated to child nutrition programs across Canada.

Working to ensure every child in Canada attends school well-nourished and ready to learn, Breakfast for Learning has helped start and sustain over 3,100 school-based breakfast, lunch and snack programs, serving over 360,000 students each year. In addition, Breakfast for Learning provides ongoing program support, child nutrition education, resources and research to help raise awareness and educate communities about the vital link between proper nutrition and learning.



EARLY  
MORNING

tips

## Breakfast on a budget

Healthy eating on a budget is easy to do with a little thought and preparation, and involving your kids in the process is a great way to teach them about good nutrition and spending habits. Try these helpful hints to get you started:

### PREPARE MEALS AT HOME

Find nutritious recipes your family enjoys, and cook them together. Stock your cupboards with affordable, healthy staples such as canned tomatoes, beans and brown rice.

### TRY MEAT ALTERNATIVES

Decreasing your meat consumption can help stretch your grocery budget and is a great opportunity for kids to try different protein sources such as beans, tofu and lentils.

### MAKE WISE PRODUCE SELECTIONS

Buy in-season fruits and vegetables: they are less expensive and are a great way to introduce kids to a variety of new flavours.

Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, yet busy mornings can make planning a nutritious breakfast seem daunting. Try these breakfast ideas – they're easy and healthy ways to start your day off right and ensure that your family has the energy they need for the day ahead.

- Cooked oatmeal (use milk to cook the oatmeal) topped with raisins and apples.
- Scrambled eggs on whole grain toast, with a glass of orange juice or fresh fruit.
- A smoothie made with fresh or frozen fruit, low fat yogurt and milk. Pair with a slice of whole grain bread.
- Multigrain pancakes topped with fruit and yogurt. Make the pancakes ahead and just heat them up in the microwave.
- Leftover vegetable pizza with some fresh fruit on the side.

# Omega-3s gets high scores



**O**mega-3 fatty acids play a crucial role in our overall good health, and because omega-3s are highly concentrated in our brains, they are important for cognitive memory and performance as well as behavioural function.

Including these healthy fats in our diets can promote normal brain function and support healthy growth and development. Studies exploring the link between omega-3s and children's brain health show that kids who have increased amounts of omega-3 fatty acids perform better in school, especially in reading and in spelling, and have fewer behavioural problems.

As you know, a balanced lifestyle for your child includes eating from each of the four food groups every day. Recognizing the nutritional value of eggs, Canada's Food Guide includes a serving of two eggs as part of the Meat and Alternatives food group.

## Did you know?

It is important to start your child's day off right with a healthy and nutritious breakfast that is high in protein – like eggs. Eggs contain 6 grams of high quality protein and 14 important nutrients. Protein keeps kids feeling full for longer, so they can concentrate in the classroom and not on their rumbling stomachs.



## SUNNY EGG FACE

- 5 eggs
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) milk
- Salt and pepper, to taste
- 2 tbsp (30 mL) butter or margarine
- 6 cherry tomatoes, sliced
- 1 small red or green pepper, cut into strips
- ¼ cup (50 mL) sliced black olives
- ½ cup (125 mL) shredded Cheddar or Mozzarella cheese
- 2 tsp (10 mL) chopped fresh parsley
- Ketchup

⇒ Whisk together eggs, milk, salt and pepper, to taste. Melt butter or margarine in a 10-inch (25 cm) skillet, over medium-low heat. Pour in egg mixture; cover and cook, without stirring, for 5 to 10 minutes or until just set.

⇒ Slide omelette out onto a cutting board; let cool for a few minutes. Meanwhile, place tomatoes, red or green pepper, olives, cheese and parsley in separate bowls.

⇒ Using a large round cookie cutter, cut 4 "faces" out of the omelette. Decorate egg faces using the veggies, cheese and ketchup.

Visit [eggs.ca](http://eggs.ca) for more quick breakfast recipes.

# Make breakfast FUN



Having fun with food is a great way to keep kids involved in healthy eating and encourage them to try new foods and enjoy breakfast. Add a little sparkle to their breakfast by turning pancakes into shapes or words, or let kids create faces on their toast with different types of fruits. You can even let your kids make their own breakfast parfait with layers of yogurt, fruit and granola. Giving kids creativity when it comes to breakfast will add a little excitement to their morning routine and still give them the nutrition they need to start their day off right.

## SMART BERRY MUFFINS

- 1 loaf **Smart™ Bread**
- 1 cup (250 mL) mixed fresh or frozen berries
- 6 eggs
- 3 cups (750 mL) milk
- 1 cup (250 mL) 10% cream
- ¾ cup (175 mL) brown sugar
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) vanilla
- 1 tsp (5 mL) cinnamon
- ¼ cup (50 mL) pure maple syrup

- ➔ Cut bread (with crusts) into 1-inch (2.5 cm) cubes. Set aside.
- ➔ In large bowl, whisk together eggs, milk, cream, sugar, vanilla and cinnamon. Add cubed bread and toss gently to combine until all egg mixture has been absorbed by bread.
- ➔ Gently toss with berries and divide mixture into 24 paper-lined or lightly greased muffin cups.
- ➔ Bake in the center of a 375°F (190°C) oven for 30 minutes or until puffed and golden and knife inserted in the center comes out clean. Drizzle with maple syrup. Let cool. Makes 24 muffins.

**tip:** Make these ahead and wrap individually, then freeze. Microwave them for a warm, nutritious breakfast or snack in seconds.



## Did you know?

**Magnesium is a healthy mineral, essential for keeping the heart rhythm steady and the immune system and bones strong. Magnesium is found in whole grains, so to ensure your child is getting enough daily, simply switch them to Smart™ Bread. Each serving contains whole grains and has the taste, texture and colour of white bread that kids love.**

# How important are snacks throughout the day?



**A SENSIBLE SNACK CHOICE** *Mr.Christie's Snak Paks Soft Baked Cookies* are delicious and peanut-free. Plus, they contain a touch of vegetable purée to help make them soft.

Healthy snacks are an important source of fuel for growing bodies and minds. Nutritious and balanced snacks give kids a boost of energy to help them stay engaged and alert throughout their day at school.

Snacks are also a great source of nutrients and can help kids meet all of their daily requirements from Canada's Food Guide. For smart snacking, aim for at least two of the four

food groups. Including a combination of proteins and carbohydrates will also give children a quick source of energy and keep them feeling full.

Putting healthy snacks in your child's backpack will encourage them to eat healthily between meals and give them the energy they need to learn and grow. For easy and nutritious snacks, try pairing vegetable sticks with hummus, an apple with cheese, or yogurt with berries.

## Keep kids hydrated

One hundred percent fruit juices are a convenient and delicious way for kids to stay hydrated during the day. They can also help in meeting the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables to keep kids healthy and energized.

Canada's food guide recommends between five and eight servings of fruits and vegetables for school-aged kids – ½ cup of 100 percent fruit juice counts for one serving! It also contains important vitamins and minerals, and no added sugar, making it a great addition to a nutritious breakfast or snack.

Using reusable containers for your kids is a great way to encourage them to stay hydrated throughout the day, learn about serving sizes, and help the environment. Engage your kids in the process by letting them pick out their own water or juice container, or let them decorate one of their own.

**No sugar added, always refreshing and full of flavour. Not made from concentrate, Oasis® Premium Orange juice brings you the authentic taste of freshly squeezed fruit, with two servings of fruit per 250 mL.**



# Lunch box envy

Getting kids to eat their school lunches can be a challenge. Here are a few easy tips to get kids excited about lunch, and help them get the energy they need.



- 1 Get them involved in planning; sit down with your kids, talk about healthy food choices and find out what they would like to see in their lunch.
- 2 Have them help pack their lunch; let them pick which vegetables to put in a container, or have them count out their crackers and cheese.
- 3 Make their lunch colourful and fun; try cutting sandwiches into shapes, and use brightly coloured containers or add a personal touch such as a special note.

## Did you know?

According to the Allergy Asthma Information Association, up to four percent of children suffer from allergies from foods such as peanuts, tree nuts, shellfish and milk.

## VEGGIE 'N' DIP SMART WRAP

- 1 **Smart™ Tortilla** (7")
- 1 tbsp (15 mL) vegetable (spreadable) cream cheese
- ½ cup (125 mL) combination of slices of cucumber, red pepper, shredded carrot, broccoli florets

- ⇒ Arrange a tortilla on a clean surface.
- ⇒ Spread with cream cheese and top with your favourite veggies.
- ⇒ Fold in sides and roll up to enclose filling.



## Did you know?

Vitamin C is essential for normal growth and development, and also helps to prevent infections and heal wounds. Citrus fruits and juices, strawberries, tomatoes, mangoes, peppers and broccoli are all high in vitamin C.



## It's a wash

If it's done right, hand washing can be the simplest and most effective way to keep your family healthy. In the 20 seconds it takes to wash hands properly, kids can radically reduce the risk of spreading and contracting illnesses.

But to a kid 20 seconds feels like forever! To show them how easy it is, use your favourite antibacterial soap and walk them through the steps (front, back, between the fingers and under the nails). Sing a chorus of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat" to illustrate just how little time it takes to stay happy and healthy!

## Down and Dirty

The idea of letting your kids run amuck – literally – may be stressful, but exposing children to dirt and bacteria can actually be good for them. A recent study done by the University of California San Diego discovered that contact with a particular "germ" could reduce inflammation due to injury. This is just another addition to the growing body of scientific evidence that supports the "dirt is good" hypothesis. Maybe a little dirt never hurt anyone after all.

But dirt sure can hurt their clothes! To get their duds clean after an afternoon of fun, use a detergent that delves deep down into fabric fibres and removes ground-in dirt and soil. And remember to pre-treat for better results.



## Did you know?

The average child spends 5.5 hours daily in front of a screen? Encourage your child to be active by limiting their computer and television time, and you'll see the benefits in their nightly sleep pattern and energy levels.

# Brace yourself for back to school



After the long, lazy days of summer come the busy, and sometimes hectic, days of fall – and getting ready for back to school can be a daunting task. But, armed with a thorough list of to-dos, the transition for you and your family can be a breeze.

Remember to start organizing carpools early, so you can make room for it in your schedule. And set

aside some time to try on last year's clothes and shoes well ahead of time to see what fits and what you need to buy. Once you have a solid wardrobe, (including wet-weather gear such as rubber boots and a rain jacket) attach nametags to smaller items such as hats and umbrellas and other things your

child could easily forget to bring home.

Finally, make sure to send your child to school as healthy as possible! Book a check-up with the pediatrician, and let the school know of any allergies or medical concerns your child may have to ensure a safe and worry-free year!

## Get crafty



**Weekends were made for adventure, but when rain thwarts your family escapades, it can be a challenge to find something that keeps the kids entertained. Here's an easy activity that will brighten any day.**

### MURAL MAGIC

Expand the refrigerator art gallery to the rest of the house. Tools? A roll of craft paper, a healthy supply of markers, pencil crayons and crayons, a glue stick that has good adhesion and is acid- and solvent-free and several pieces of your child's artwork. The project? Measure a stretch of wall in your home and cut a piece of craft paper

to fit the space. Lay it out on the floor and, using the colouring tools, create one-dimensional "frames" approximately the size of the artwork selected. Once the frames are complete, adhere the paintings and drawings with the glue stick to the craft paper to create a gallery look. Mount it on the wall using painter's tape, then sit back and enjoy!

