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## **SP426-J-Tennessee Shapes Up - Eat Breakfast**

The University of Tennessee Agricultural Extension Service

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# TENNESSEE ShapesUP

## ***EAT BREAKFAST!***

- *overweight people tend to skip breakfast*
- *people who skip breakfast eat about 100 calories more each day than those who do eat breakfast*

# Eat Breakfast

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*Written by  
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***Your mother was right, breakfast is the most important meal of the day...***

Breakfast really is the most important meal of the day because it breaks a night of fasting (going without food). It replenishes your supply of energy and other essential nutrients to keep your energy level up throughout the day. Breakfast helps provide folate, iron, B vitamins, protein, calcium and other important nutrients needed for good health.

If you are trying to lose weight, avoid skipping breakfast. You will not lose weight any faster by going without breakfast. Eat something in the morning even if you are not hungry.

**People who eat breakfast have advantages over those who skip breakfast. A healthy breakfast helps you**

- Stay healthier
- Stabilize blood sugar and reduce your risk for diabetes
- Reduce your risk for heart attacks
- Children learn better in school
- Reduce appetite the rest of the day
- Reduce irritability and improve disposition

**People who skip breakfast tend to nibble and snack more than those who eat breakfast.**

**Allow children some choices for breakfast. Provide a variety of healthy foods and let them choose what they want to eat.**

**Be sure there is enough time for breakfast: get up 15 minutes early.**

**Families can save time for breakfast by doing some preparations the night before.**

- Finish homework and pack all school bags. Put bags by door for easy access when you leave in the morning.
- Plan what to wear the next day. Locate lost shoes and other items that will be needed in the morning.
- Iron or press clothing, if needed.
- Set out cereal.
- Pack lunches. Refrigerate items that could spoil.

**Shop in advance and keep a variety of healthy breakfast foods on hand.**

***Quick Breakfast Ideas***

- Banana dog (peanut butter, a banana and raisins on a long whole wheat bun)
- Breakfast taco (shredded cheese on tortilla, fold in half and microwave, top with salsa)
- Sandwich (grilled cheese, peanut butter and jelly, or another favorite)
- Leftover pizza (warmed) served with 100 percent fruit juice
- Pancake roll (microwave a frozen pancake, spread with peanut butter, top with sliced banana or other fruit, and roll up)
- Breakfast parfait (layer fruit yogurt, sliced fruit and crunchy cereal in a bowl)
- Bagel (split and spread each half with peanut butter, add a sprinkle of raisins) with a glass of milk
- Hot cereal (there are many quick-cooking choices)
- Eggs (hard boil the night before and store in refrigerator)
- Whole grain toast (spread with peanut butter) with juice and skim milk

**If necessary, eat breakfast in the car. But if you must eat while driving, stay alert and focus on your driving. Peel or unwrap food before you drive.**

**Read labels on popular breakfast cereals and energy bars. Many are high in sugar and not as healthy as they appear.**

**Eating a high-fiber breakfast helps reduce fatigue. For high-fiber, choose 100 percent whole grains and whole fruits.**

**If you must buy breakfast on the way to school or work, find places where you can get healthy choices.**

- Avoid sweet pastries and doughnuts, which provide empty calories and set you up for a massive energy slump.
- Choose low-sugar, low-fat, high-fiber and high-protein foods (for example, choose an egg on a whole-grain English muffin).

**Breakfast does not have to be an elaborate or sit-down ordeal, but it is important to eat breakfast. Combine common sense with good nutrition, and the whole family will be healthier and happier.**

**Breakfast Pattern**  
**Protein food**  
**100% whole grain**  
**Fruit or fruit juice**  
**Fat-free milk or yogurt**

**Protein sources include milk, eggs, whole-grain cereal or other higher-protein cereal, dry milk solids added to fluid milk, any leftover meat, peanut butter, cheese, etc.**

**Choose whole fruit or fruit juice without added sugar. Be sure to choose 100 percent fruit juice.**

**Visit the UT Family and Consumer Science Web site at  
<http://fcs.tennessee.edu>**

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