

# The New Breakfast Club- Healthy fuel for busy mornings!

(By Marianne McGinnis- from Prevention.com)

It's a no-brainer: Healthy breakfasts fuel good days at school--and beyond. Landmark studies link even the simplest morning meal (a bowl of cereal, a splash of milk, a few banana slices) with better attention spans, sharper fact recall, and happier moods for kids. Newer research links morning eating with less obesity, stronger bones, and healthier teeth.

Yet kids are dropping out of the breakfast club at an alarming rate: Although 95 percent of elementary school kids (and 87 percent of teens) ate breakfast in 1965, fewer than 86 percent (and fewer than 70 percent of teens) do so today. The reason: rushed mornings, busy families.

## The solution? Breakfast to go.

"A good breakfast is easier than you think," says children's nutritionist Jackie Berning, PhD, RD, of the University of Colorado. "Choosing the right foods, you can make an easy brown-bag breakfast in advance or even buy breakfast at a fast-food place or convenience store and know that your kids are getting a healthy meal." Just follow Berning's three-food rule:

### 1. Fruit

Whole or cut-up fruit, or 1/2 cup of orange juice. Fruit supplies carbohydrates (for energy), vitamins A and C, plus a wealth of healthy antioxidants.

### 2. Whole grains

Whole wheat toast (look for varieties with at least 3 g of fiber per slice) or hot or cold whole grain cereal. Grains provide carbs, vitamin E, folic acid, and heart-healthy fiber.

### 3. Protein

Two eggs, 6 to 8 ounces of low-fat yogurt, 1 cup of 1 percent milk, or 2 tablespoons of peanut butter. Protein is the building block for growth and for repairing most body systems; dairy sources add bone-building calcium.

The following three-food meals are easy to put together on a busy morning and even easier to eat on the run.

### Brown-Bag Breakfasts

Assemble these meals in brown paper bags the night before and keep them ready in your fridge.

- A container of low-fat yogurt, an apple, and a Puffins Cereal & Milk Bar (available at some supermarkets and natural food stores)
- A mozzarella cheese stick, two slices of whole wheat bread with a dab of trans fat-free margarine, and 1 cup of seedless red grapes
- A half-pint carton of 1 percent milk, a banana, and half of a peanut butter sandwich on whole wheat bread
- Breakfast trail mix (1 cup whole grain cereal, 1/4 cup nuts, 1/4 cup dried fruit) and a half-pint carton of 1 percent milk

### Fast Food

- Dunkin' Donuts: half of a wheat bagel with light cream cheese, small orange juice, and a half-pint carton of 1 percent milk
- McDonald's: Fruit 'n Yogurt Parfait with Granola and orange juice (bring a single-serve box of whole grain cereal to add more healthy fiber)
- Gas-station convenience store: a container of low-fat yogurt, a banana or small orange juice, and a single-serve box of whole grain cereal