

March 2008 Nutrition Notes from Angela

It wasn't until teaching the importance of eating breakfast to 3rd graders all week that I discovered my morning routine had fallen into a rut. I had eaten the same whole grain waffles with peanut butter for months! Oh, I might've added a banana or an apple for variety but for the most part it was the same old thing every day. So, after a week of sharing different breakfast food ideas with the kids, I decided to add some variety back to my morning meal.

It's true that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. It "breaks" our overnight "fast," which is how the word came about. After 8 or more hours without food, your body and brain need refueling. Your ability to make decisions, your alertness and productivity suffer if you don't replenish your depleted "fuel" stores. Eating breakfast also gets those important nutrients like, vitamin C, vitamin A, calcium, potassium and fiber into our body daily. Skip breakfast and you set yourself up for low-energy, over-eating later in the day. In addition, studies have shown that breakfast eaters have lower blood cholesterol, increased mental alertness, higher metabolism and healthier overall diets than non-breakfast eaters. So why do so many skip breakfast? Some say they don't have time, are not hungry, or are trying to lose weight. On average breakfast eaters eat LESS in a day than breakfast skippers do so it's a great way to lose weight. Here are some easy ideas to make breakfast a part of your day:

- **Cereal** (5 grams or less of sugar) with fresh or frozen fruit, vanilla soymilk or non-fat milk, sprinkled with walnuts or almonds, flax meal and cinnamon.
- **Yogurt parfait.** Layer in a cup; granola, canned or fresh fruit, low-fat vanilla yogurt, frozen berries, and a sprinkling of cinnamon.
- **Meuseli;** can be made night before. Combine mueseli mix (Bob's red mill is good) or 1/2 cup rolled oats with 1/2 cup milk, dash of cinnamon, and favorite dried fruit in a bowl; stir combine. Cover and refrigerate overnight. In morning before serving, stir in 1/2 apple cored and diced and 1 tablespoon or more, plain low-fat yogurt. You can substitute soy, almond or rice milk, or apple juice for skim milk. Try adding nuts, or other favorite, seasonal fruits.
- **Whole-wheat waffle** with peanut butter, dried cranberries and a banana; sprinkle with cinnamon.
- **High calcium smoothie.** 1-cup yogurt, 1 cup calcium-fortified OJ, 1 banana, 1 cup of your favorite frozen fruit, ground flax meal, and cinnamon. Blend and enjoy. Add some matcha green tea (powdered green tea found in Asian markets) for variety.
- **Breakfast burrito.** Scramble eggs or egg whites. Place in whole-wheat tortilla top with a little cheese, salsa and avocado (or guacamole) roll and enjoy!
- **Muffins.** Whole grain muffins with fruit or nuts are easily made in batches and can be frozen and reheated as needed. Try the recipe on the back of Bob's Red Mill Flax meal.

Breakfast can be any type of food. So, don't make excuses for skipping breakfast. Give your body the fuel it needs in the morning. Try adding **yoga** to your morning routine as well. a few **sun salutations** will increase your energy and get your appetite going.