

Benefits of Eating Breakfast for Students



You've probably heard the "breakfast is the most important meal of the day" a million times before; but it turns out that it may be true, especially when it comes to students. Eating a healthy breakfast before starting the school day is linked to improved concentration, better test scores, increased energy, a higher intake of vitamins and minerals, and even a healthier body weight. Breakfast is especially important for young students whose brains use up about half of the body's energy.

Improved Concentration

Students who eat a healthy breakfast tend to have better concentration than students who skip breakfast altogether. When the day starts with breakfast, students can focus on the task at hand better and become less distracted by outside influences and other students. They're also able to understand what's being taught more easily and retain that new information better than students who are hungry because they've skipped breakfast.

Better Test Scores

Students who eat breakfast before starting their school day don't just concentrate better, they tend to score better on academic tests in math, reading, and science. According to a study published in the Journal of Economics, students in schools that offered free breakfasts before class scored about 25 percent higher on math, reading and science tests. Researchers

believe that this is because the breakfast provides the energy necessary to increase cognitive, or thinking, speed and problem-solving skills.

Increased Energy

When you sleep, you're technically fasting, since you're going without food. Because of this, your blood sugar starts to drop overnight. When you wake up and eat breakfast, it provides the glucose your body needs for energy to get through the day. When students wake up after an overnight fast and go to school without eating breakfast, they start the day with low blood sugar that just keeps getting lower. This can leave them feeling slow and sluggish and make it more difficult to get through the day, or at least their morning classes. On the other hand, eating a healthy breakfast before school raises blood sugar to a healthy level and provides the necessary energy that students need to perform well in class until lunchtime.

Beyond Academics

It's not just about test scores and concentration, though. Eating breakfast can help students meet their daily nutrient needs more easily. According to a report published in the journal *Frontiers in Human Neuroscience*, children who regularly eat breakfast take in approximately 20 to 60 percent more iron, B vitamins and vitamin D than children who skip breakfast. Breakfast eaters also tend to take in more daily fiber and lower total fat and dietary cholesterol. Regularly eating breakfast is also associated with a healthier body mass index, or BMI, and a decreased likelihood of obesity. Research shows that students who regularly eat breakfast have an easier time maintaining a healthy body weight than students who are regular breakfast skippers.