



Why is Breakfast Important for Seniors?

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Nutrition is important throughout our lives. However, as we age, if we want to stay active, healthy and independent, it becomes crucial. Things start to catch up to us. If we don't eat well, exercise (www.forever-fit.net) and get the right amount of rest, we can develop problems such as diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, various forms of cancer, arthritis, Alzheimer's, dementia and more. Before changing your nutrition, always consult your physician's advice as you may have personal nutritional needs.

What does eating breakfast have to do with all of this? Well, it's a good start. Not only as a good nutritional tip, but a good breakfast is a great way to start your day.

As we live our lives, we develop habits. Some are good, others not so good. There should be some balance. We developed bad habits, not eating breakfast sometimes. We simply get up, rush to get dressed, go to work, and go about our day.

If you still work into senior years, it's just the way you are. Perhaps you're retired and carried over the habit from when you were working. Maybe you think you may not have time for breakfast but you find yourself hungry before lunch and start to snack on whatever's around, healthy or not. You may over eat for lunch and dinner or snack throughout the day, because you did not take the opportunity to eat breakfast. Now your body doesn't have the energy it needs and you feel run down.



The good news is it doesn't have to be that way. ***Small habits are how we make good changes, learn and grow to develop better habits so we live a longer, happier and healthier life into our senior years.*** We can have the energy to do all the things we want, spend time with our loved ones and enjoy life. Eating a healthy breakfast can kickstart your metabolism, give you energy to start your day and keep you from eating too much for a mid-morning snack or lunch. It helps you start your day and nutrition off right.

Where does breakfast fit our busy schedule? We all probably have about 10 to 20 minutes to spare in our morning that we may not utilize. I know what you're thinking, "No, I don't." Maybe not 10 to 20 extra minutes, however we can fit it in while we do other things. Start your breakfast cooking, go clean up, get dressed and eat. Below I have added some quick, easy breakfast ideas, the nutrients they provide and how they may benefit us as we stay active into our senior years.

Here are some suggestions to try:

Fruit – Just eat it! (LG Apple about 110 Calories), (Banana about 121 Calories)

- It can really be any kind of fruit. Apples have Pectin, a form of fiber and fructose to give us energy and help your digestion. The pectin in one apple gives you about the same amount of energy as a cup of coffee and without the jitters some seniors get from caffeine
- Bananas have potassium to balance our hydration, which can help with fatigue and muscle sourness, especially if you get leg pain from arthritis
- **Always consult your physician about fruits especially if you are diabetic.**



2 Hard-boiled Eggs – 8-10 minutes, about 154 Calories

- Eggs are a great source of protein to build and maintain muscle strength
- Healthy carbohydrates and healthy fats for energy.
- Vitamin A for eye health to fight off cataracts, skin cancers and infections; Vitamin B2, B12 and B5 for brain and mood health to fight dementia & Alzheimer's
- HDL – High Density Lipoprotein (Healthy Cholesterol)
- Phosphorus to help teeth and bones stay strong and help filter waste through our kidneys



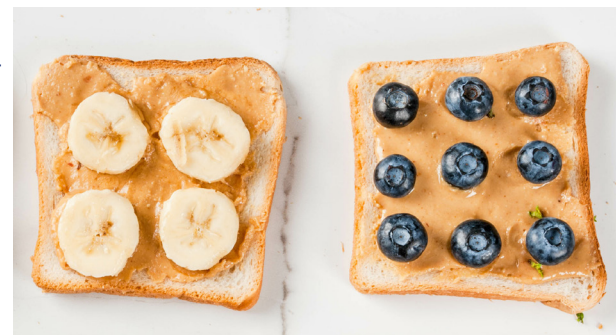
Oatmeal – 3 to 5 minutes, about 101 Calories/ serving

- Vitamin B6 for energy, mood balance and brain health to fight dementia and Alzheimer's
- Potassium & Sodium to balance our hydration
- Healthy Carbohydrates to give us energy
- Fiber to help our digestion, reduce LDL (bad cholesterol) and help control blood sugar
- Selenium for better immune and mental function.
- **If you mix in fruit you get the earlier benefits of that as well and / or milk provides calcium and vitamins A and D.**



Whole Wheat Toast with Peanut Butter – 3 minutes, about 267 Calories/ one slice with 2 Tbs PB

- Peanut butter has protein to help build and maintain muscle strength and give us energy and healthy fats for energy
- Fiber for digestion and metabolism
- Unsaturated fat for heart health to fight heart disease
- Vitamin E lowers the risk of stomach, colon, lung, liver, and other cancers
- B3 protects Against Alzheimer's Disease and other neurodegenerative diseases and oxidative stress throughout our body
- Certain Whole Wheat Toast has low carbohydrates and healthy fats for energy
- Protein to help build and maintain muscle strength
- Sodium to help with fluid balance and hydration



Protein Shake – 2 minutes, about 239 Calories/ serving

- Typically, I wouldn't recommend a shake as a meal substitute or replacement. However, if you're in a hurry, a protein shake can be a good supplement for a meal as long as it doesn't become a regular habit. Protein shakes can also be a healthy way to curb hunger as a quick source of energy throughout your day, especially if you can't always get the nutrition you need. Obviously, they have a good amount of protein to build and maintain muscle strength

- Some are even specially fortified for seniors. I won't get into nutrition facts on this one as there are many different brands and they all have a variety of nutrition specifications

- ***Always consult your physician and read nutrition labels on shakes as they are supplements and may not agree with your personal nutritional needs or medications.***

- ***Always check sugar contents especially if you are diabetic.***



Yogurt – Just eat it! About 100 Calories/1 cup

- Many yogurts have fruit in them, so we get the above benefits.

- In addition, yogurt has Vitamin D to strengthen bone density so that if we fall or get hurt, we don't fracture or break bones as easily.

- Greek yogurt has probiotics to help your digestive system and more protein to help us build and maintain muscle strength.

- ***Always read nutritional labels on yogurts as some can have high sugar content depending on the brand and ingredients. Although some yogurts may be very beneficial for diabetics and those with various nutritional needs others with high sugar content may be harmful.***



Takeaway:

Consult your physician. Show them this article. If they agree. Give it a try. Make a point to eat breakfast 3 or more times a week. See what happens and how you feel. If it works, try to eat breakfast every day. It could change your life and help you live a longer, healthier, happier life for you and those you love.



John Hoadley has been working with Forever Fit and teaching fitness with seniors since 2014. He coaches clients of all ages & abilities at fitness centers through-out Connecticut since 2010 with both group classes and individual training. John has achieved the following education: Three Rivers Community College, Norwich, CT, Human Anatomy, Biology and Physiology; National Exercise & Sports Trainers Association: Elite Training Specialist, Bio- Mechanics Specialist, Core Conditioning Specialist, Sport Yoga Instructor, Kettlebell Coach, Fitness Nutrition Coach; American Senior Fitness Association: American Senior Fitness Instructor; Precision Nutrition: Level 1 Nutrition Coach; Functional Movement Systems: FMS Level 1 Coach; National Safety Council First Aid & CPR.

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