

PENNY SAVER NEWS

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Are you a breakfast eater? Or are you one of those who can't stand the sight of food until almost noon? Do you want to guess which group of people eats more in the course of a day? If you guessed those who don't eat breakfast, you're right!

People who eat breakfast tend to eat 200 to 300 fewer calories in the course of the whole day than those who skip breakfast, or make do with just coffee. This was first noticed some years ago, and recent studies keep finding more and more evidence that it is true. By eating early our bodies don't get so hungry later on. And those breakfast calories keep us satisfied longer, later in the day.

Other benefits of eating soon after you wake up include getting more energy to your brain faster. That makes it easier for you to make good decisions, analyze situations, and respond faster to what's going on around you. In the changing world today, more brain power helps us manage.

Of course, the big complaint is that "I don't have time to eat breakfast!" It does take time to sit down and eat a bowl of cereal. All that milk can spill on the way out the door or in the car. But there's no law anywhere that says that breakfast must be cereal and milk. There's no law that says it must be anything called "breakfast food".

So, the next question for the health researchers was "Does it make a difference what we eat for breakfast?" The first studies just compared eating something, anything, soon after you get up. Eating anything is better for your brain than not eating

anything. The coffee and donut, the slice of cold pizza, the leftover lasagna, they all help. But of course, doctors have to go further than that. And, it turns out, what we eat first thing in the morning does have an effect, not only on how much we eat later but what our bodies do with those calories.

The most up to date studies have compared the effects of eating protein or eating carbs for breakfast. After all, the donuts, the cereal, the toast, even the cold pizza are mostly carbohydrate. Our grandparents' usual breakfast was eggs and meat. Might that have anything to do with our nation's weight gain? It just might!

People were given either eggs for breakfast or bagels and cream cheese for breakfast. They were carefully measured to be sure both groups were given the same number of calories. But the egg breakfast was mostly protein, the other was carbs and fat. Half of each breakfast group was given advice on how to eat a low calorie diet too, the other half was just asked to change their breakfast foods to eggs or bagels and cheese.

Do you want to guess which group lost weight? Right again, it was those people eating eggs, on a low calorie diet. The people on the same low calorie diet but with bagels for breakfast did not lose nearly as much weight. The protein from the eggs helps the body to make more muscle and less fat, and to burn off more of the fat it all ready has. The extra protein also helped to keep these people feeling full longer, so that they were not as hungry throughout the day.

When they were given protein for breakfast on just one day, they ate less that day, and the next day too. And they still reported that they didn't feel as hungry. One last new finding - not all protein will do the same thing. The protein in milk, eggs and

beef is more effective than other proteins at slowing down our appetites and speeding up the muscle building. So while beans, chicken and fish are great sources of protein, they don't have the same effect at breakfast time. So, once again, Grandma had the right idea. Have some eggs for breakfast!

Besides fried, how else can you have eggs for breakfast? You can boil 5 eggs Sunday night and have one ready for each morning that week. Slice them onto a slice of bread for a sandwich, or just eat plain! Or make a quick veggie omelet.

Protein Breakfast Omelet

1 whole egg

1 egg white

1 tsp margarine or oil

1 Tbsp water or fat-free milk

1/4 cup shredded spinach

2 Tbsp chopped tomato

pinch of salt

1 Tbsp grated low fat Swiss cheese

Beat egg, egg white, water or milk and salt together in small bowl with a wire whisk.

Heat margarine or oil in small skillet. Pour into heated skillet and tilt to spread. Use

spatula to lift edges as it firms and run the liquid underneath. When almost all the egg

is firm sprinkle the veggies and cheese on half of top. Lift and fold other half over the

filling. Cook a bit longer until all egg is firm. Serve immediately. Serves 1.