



## The Importance of Breakfast

We strongly emphasise the importance of a good diet with students, and in particular the value of breakfast prior to school.

Meal skipping at any time, but particularly at breakfast, can create problems at school. Short-term fasting is reported to affect cognition, memory, concentration and behaviour in school. After going 10–12 hours overnight without food, children's energy reserves are low and their bodies, and perhaps more importantly, their brains, need fuel.

The following ideas may be of use at home to encourage children to eat breakfast:

- A childhood favourite, peanut butter is a versatile morning food. Spread on top of wholewheat toast or an English muffin, serve it up with bananas in a sandwich, or eat it on apple slices. Of course nothing goes with peanut butter like a glass of cold milk!
- Try simply layering granola, yogurt and fruit
- Smoothies are always popular and easy to make with fresh or frozen fruit, milk and yogurt
- Leftovers? Serve leftover soup, pasta or even casserole if it's what your child will eat. Add a small piece of fruit and/or some milk too
- Offer light breakfast eaters low fat cheese, fruit and wholewheat crackers
- Whether scrambled, hard boiled or fried, eggs are a great breakfast protein and are great when paired with toast or a piece of fresh fruit. Check cookbooks or the Internet for healthy muffin recipes low in fat and higher in fibre. Many muffins freeze well and can be popped in the microwave for a quick meal
- Oatmeal is especially filling. Serve it up with slice fruit inside, sprinkled with cinnamon, or with a bit of maple syrup or apple sauce stirred in
- Cottage cheese or yogurt goes well with fresh fruit and bagels or a fruit-filled breakfast bar