

## Start This School Year Off Strong with A Healthy Breakfast

Kids who fuel up in the morning focus and concentrate better in the classroom and perform better on math, reading and standardized tests. They also have fewer behavior problems and are less likely to be tardy. Eating breakfast also can help children maintain a healthy weight. Unfortunately, studies show many children don't eat breakfast every day.



A high-octane carbohydrate source energizes the body and brain for a busy day with fiber and nutrients. Whole-grain cereal (hot or cold), bread, tortillas, muffins, and waffles can all be good choices. Protein often is a missing link in morning meals. Protein is needed to go strong until lunch. Great ideas for protein in the morning can be a slice of Canadian bacon, an egg, a slice of lean deli meat or low-fat cheese, a container of low-fat yogurt, a scoop of low-fat cottage cheese, a cup of milk or a handful of nuts.

Breakfast is a perfect time to enjoy fruits and vegetables which children need for optimal health. Try fresh seasonal fruit alone or in cereal, add frozen fruits to yogurt or toss chopped vegetables into an omelet.

Source: adapted from Eatright.org, Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

Including cereal as an option can make breakfast quick and easy. Below is an article that can help you and your family make eating breakfast daily simple by making healthy cereal choices.



# What to Look for When Buying Cereal

## Go for Whole Grains

The healthiest cereals have **whole grains**, bran or 100% whole grains listed as its **first 2 ingredients**. If the corn or wheat isn't whole and the rice isn't brown, then you must assume it has been processed. Oats, sprouted grains, "ancient" grains like quinoa, millet or sorghum are whole even if the label doesn't say they are.



## Check Serving Size

Check serving sizes when comparing cereals. Many manufacturers want their foods to look healthy so they may adjust the serving size so the numbers on the food label look better than they may really be. It can make comparing foods a bit challenging.

## Watch Out for Added Sugars

Most cereals are loaded with sugar! The general rule is to **limit added sugars to 8 grams or less per serving**. Did you know that 1 ½ teaspoons is equivalent to 7 grams of sugar?



Don't be fooled by other names for sugars such as dried cane syrup, agave, honey, molasses, fructose, fruit juice concentrate, sucrose or table sugar.

## Fiber

**Choose cereals with at least 3 grams of fiber per serving.** Don't be fooled by added, processed fibers such as: inulin, chicory root fiber, oat fiber, soluble corn or wheat fibers. These processed fibers may not keep you regular, lower your cholesterol, or keep your blood sugar lower as well as eating the real stuff, unprocessed fiber.

**Wheat bran, whole-grain wheat, and oats are better for you.**

Brown rice and whole-grain corn have less fiber.



## Look for Real Fruit

Read labels carefully to make sure that there is real fruit in the cereal. Some cereals say they have blueberries, but they are actually colored and flavored apple pieces. Others may contain corn syrup, blueberry flavoring, oil, dried figs, and food coloring.

Did you know that the healthier cereals are usually stocked up high or down lower on the shelves of the cereal aisle?

Cereals that have the highest levels of sugar are typically stocked at eye level of most children!

## Protein

Best choices contain **at least 3 grams of protein** per serving.



## Fats

Look for cereals with **2 ½ grams or less of saturated fat per serving**. Most cereals have little or no fat, but granolas are where you need be more careful.

## How to Compare Products

Sometimes finding a healthy cereal can be a challenge. Therefore, it is very important to read food labels. Let's look at the food labels below to compare a popular cinnamon flavored cereal with a healthier option. Both cereals have **less than 2 ½ grams of saturated fat**, but the cereal on the left doesn't have the recommended **3 grams of fiber** or **3 grams of protein**. The cereal on the left also has more than the recommended **8 grams of added sugars**. Since the cereal on the left has too much sugar, not enough fiber or protein it makes the cereal on the right a much better choice.

### Nutrition Facts

About 13 servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (41g)
Amount per serving Popular Cinnamon Cereal	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>170</b>
% Daily Value	
<b>Total Fat</b> 4g*	5%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 1g	
Monounsaturated Fat 2.5g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	0%
<b>Sodium</b> 230mg	10%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 33g	12%
Dietary Fiber 2g	7%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes Added Sugars 12g	24%
<b>Protein</b> 2g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 130mg	10%
Iron 3.6mg	20%
Potassium 0mg	0%

✔ Less than 2 ½ grams saturated fat

⊘ Less than 3 grams fiber

⊘ More than 8 grams Added sugars

### Nutrition Facts

servings per container	
Serving size	1 cup (42g)
Amount per serving Healthier Cinnamon Cereal	
<b>Calories</b>	<b>150</b>
% Daily Value	
<b>Total Fat</b> 2g	2.56%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 0.5g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0.5g	
<b>Cholesterol</b> 0mg	0%
<b>Sodium</b> 60mg	2.61%
<b>Total Carbohydrate</b> 35g	12.73%
Dietary Fiber 5g	18%
Total Sugars 7g	
Includes Added Sugars 6g	12%
<b>Protein</b> 4g	4%
Calcium 10mg	0%
Iron 12mg	60%
Magnesium 34mg	8%
Phosphorus 125 mg	10%
Potassium 110mg	2%
Vitamin D 0mg	0%
Zinc 0.66 mg	6%

✔ Less than 2 ½ grams saturated fat

✔ More than 3 grams fiber

✔ Less than 8 grams Added sugars

# \* 🌙 Sleep, Diet, and Exercise

Our food choices play a big role in our lives, affecting our energy levels, mental health, long term health, and sleep!



The right food choices along with proper hydration can improve our exercise ability and decrease our levels of fatigue.

Consuming large quantities of unhealthy foods can lead to long term health problems including heart disease, stroke, and diabetes.

A balanced nutritious diet helps our bodies fight long term health issues as well as reduce the risk of anxiety and depression.

Engaging in regular exercise also helps reduce the risk of anxiety and depression as well as strengthens our bones and fights off multiple diseases!

Exercising for at least 60 mins a day can improve our sleep quality and reduce sleep disturbances such as insomnia and sleep apnea.



**Be kind to your body, It's the only one you get!!**