

## Extension TOW - Breakfast – A Healthy Habit – September 8, 2008

Breakfast means just that- breaking the fast. Breakfast fuels the body with nutrients, provides food energy for the morning, and gets children ready to learn. Research proves that students do better in school and have better test scores when they eat a healthy breakfast. Adults get more done in the morning when they eat breakfast. Research shows that breakfast eaters tend to eat fewer calories and fat throughout the day, which is important for maintaining a healthy weight. Studies also show that breakfast eaters are at a reduced risk for heart disease.

You can eat a wide variety of foods for breakfast. It does not have to be cereal or toast! A good rule to follow : ***Have a breakfast that includes food from at least three different food groups from the Food Pyramid- grains, fruit and/or vegetable, and either protein or dairy.***

Breakfast can be simple or elaborate, cooked or uncooked. What you eat is less important than making a habit of eating something.

If you choose cereal, check the Nutrition Facts label for the following desired characteristics. Note that not all cereals will meet these criteria, but try to choose those with high fiber and low fat content. Ideally, choose those cereals with less than 3 grams fat per serving and 5 or more grams of fiber per serving. Or try something different for breakfast like:

- A peanut butter sandwich, orange wedges and a cup of cocoa.
- Low-fat cottage cheese with fruit and toast.
- Blender mixture of milk, fruit juice and plain yogurt.

It is the perfect time to resume (or begin) the breakfast habit!