

TIPS FOR A BALANCED BREAKFAST



BREAKFAST CEREALS

Choose breakfast cereals that are low in salt and sugar and that have no added honey or chocolate coating. Choose cereals that are fortified with iron and Vitamin D. At least one of the cereal options should be high in fibre or wholegrain. Allow children to mix higher fibre cereals with others to encourage intake. Try having different cereals on different days to encourage variety of choice.

DRINKING WATER

Drinking water should be freely available at all times. Provide tap water in jugs and allow children to serve themselves.

LOWER-FAT MILK OR LACTOSE REDUCED MILK

Milk is source of calcium, vitamin B12 and protein. Low-fat milk has a fat content of 1.8% or less. Milk fortified with vitamin D will also help children to reach their vitamin D requirement.

TOAST

Choose wholemeal or granary breads or breads which are a 50:50 mix of wholemeal and white and have more fibre. Try toasted bagels, scones or soda bread to add variety.



FRUIT JUICE

Make sure that your fruit juice contains 100% unsweetened pure fruit juice. Limit to 1 small glass (150ml glass) a day. Check the carton label - if a product is labelled as 'fruit drink', 'juice drink' or 'fruit juice drink' this means that sugar and water have been added.

YOGHURT

Choose plain or fruit options.



FRESH FRUIT

If possible, offer fresh fruit every day. Have fruits that are easy for children to eat and in appropriate portion sizes. Chop up fruit into bite-size portions where possible.



FRUIT PLATTERS AND SMOOTHIES

Think of different ways to serve fruit. Once a week you could have a fresh fruit platter of exotic fruits to encourage children to try new fruits. Make it a fun and sociable experience. Smoothies made from fresh fruit and low-fat yoghurts are a way of getting children to have fruit.





HOT FOOD

Hot foods should only be served occasionally. Hot food can add variety to a menu and act as an incentive for children to attend a breakfast club. If attendance is low on certain days, serving hot foods may encourage more children to come on these days. Check the National School Food Standards as some foods, such as sausages, can only be served a certain number of times a week. This includes food being provided at all times in school, so speak with those involved in serving food at lunch time or after-school.

SPREADS AND TOPPINGS

Read the food labels and avoid any that contain hydrogenated fats. Butter, margarine and spreads may be offered, but encourage children to spread these thinly. Offer reduced sugar jam or marmalade or low fat soft cheese as alternatives.

ADDING SUGAR

Avoid adding sugar to cereals and porridge. This includes honey and brown sugar which are all additional sugar.

SALT

Salt should not be added to food during cooking and should not be made available at the table for children to add to food.

FRUIT JUICES AND SMOOTHIES

Fruit juices contain a variety of vitamins but don't contain the fibre found in whole fruit.

It is important to encourage children to eat raw whole fruit as well as drinking pure fruit juices or smoothies. However, a child's combined total of drinks from fruit juice or smoothies should not be more than 150mls a day - which is a small glass. Fruit juices and smoothies also contain sugar that can damage teeth.

Fruit juice 'drinks' are not the same as pure fruit juice. Many are simply flavoured water and sugar with very little real fruit juice added. Make sure that your fruit juice contains 100% unsweetened pure fruit juice to ensure you are giving the children a better option.

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