

News Column

By: Cassidy Lutz

K-State Research and Extension Greenwood County

Family and Community Wellness Extension Agent

### *Creating Healthy Eating Habits*

You have probably heard the saying “Breakfast is the most important meal of the day”. Although hitting the snooze button might seem like a better idea than getting up to fix breakfast, fight that urge!

Studies have found that eating a good breakfast is linked to better mental performance, higher energy levels, healthier eating habits, and a higher metabolism. It is also important to make smart choices about the foods we choose to fuel our bodies with at breakfast time.

Here are 4 tips to help you build a smart breakfast for yourself and your family:

- 1. Keep it simple:** Fancy breakfasts can be nice occasionally, but many of us are racing the clock in the mornings and cannot make elaborate meals every morning. A cup of yogurt and fresh fruit with a slice of whole-wheat toast is simple, quick, and starts the day with foods from multiple groups as suggested by the USDA MyPlate nutrition guide.
- 2. Plan and shop ahead of time:** Having healthy food already purchased and prepared will help you become more of a morning person. Try keeping sliced fruit or hard-boiled eggs in the refrigerator for quick options. You can keep “grab and go” food on hand like whole-wheat bagels, fruit, or yogurt.
- 3. Almost anything goes:** As consumers, we often put our own limitations on what we consider breakfast foods. Whether you choose a traditional breakfast food like cereal or eggs or opt for foods that many typically eat for lunch or dinner like steak or potatoes, the main thing to keep in mind is that you make a healthy choice. Try to avoid sugary cereals, soda, doughnuts, and other foods that are full of fats and added sugars.
- 4. Split your breakfast in half:** If you struggle with not being hungry first thing in the morning, try to eat at least a small portion of your meal before you leave the house. Pack the rest for later when you get those mid-morning munchies. Splitting your breakfast will help you not overindulge whenever you finally become hungry later in the morning.

Using these simple tips can help you reap the benefits of eating a healthy meal at the start of the day. No matter if you make an exquisite meal or down some simple foods as you rush out the door, breakfast should be part of everyone’s daily routine.

For more information about Family and Community Wellness, 4-H Youth Development, or K-State Research and Extension, contact the office at 620-583-7455, email me at [celutz@ksu.edu](mailto:celutz@ksu.edu) or stop by the office. Visit the K-State Research and Extension - Greenwood County Facebook page and [www.greenwood.k-state.edu](http://www.greenwood.k-state.edu) for more up-to-date information on programming.