

[IMAGE]

Don't Skip the Most Important Meal of the Day

By Julie T. Chen, MD

I know that most mornings we are all rushing out the door in a frenzy to try to get to work on time but, what we sometimes forget is that the few extra minutes it takes to have a healthy wholesome breakfast might make all the difference as to whether you are able to have a productive day or if you will be dragging most of the day to get your work done.

I frequently remind my patients on the importance of a protein-rich healthy breakfast to help you get going for a full day of activities. It is crucial to remember that your body is a machine and just like you wouldn't ask your car to drive cross country and then fill it with gas - similarly, you should not be asking your body to work hard and then feed it food after the fact.

A lot of people think that they end up saving calories if they avoid breakfast, but what they don't realize is that you usually over eat later in the day because your body is starved and trying to overcompensate for starvation mode because it didn't get the morning fuel.

If you start the day with a protein-rich diet like egg white omelet with vegetables, your body is less likely to crave sweets and your sugar load in your blood stream is more likely to be able to stay balanced throughout the day. This way, you are not starving and making poor dietary choices at lunch and dinner.

If you think that making breakfast in the morning takes too much time, one trick I like to use sometimes is to buy a hard-boiled egg maker and use that every morning for egg whites. This way, you let the machine do the cooking while you get ready for work. Another option would be to make an extra lean turkey hash with a medley of vegetables sautéed together without potatoes over the weekend and you can heat that up for breakfast during the work days.

Many of my patients end up snacking on more calories than they otherwise would have consumed at breakfast because they are starving by 10AM or late in the afternoon. When you short-change your body of the nutrients it needs, it will want to crave and consume more quick energy later that won't be so friendly to your waistline like sweet or salty snacks.

If you start the day with a more protein-rich meal, your blood sugar is more stable later in the day so that you don't have sugar dips and you are more energetic with a better ability to pick healthier snack or meal choices. This type of breakfast also ensures that your metabolism will be humming efficiently and not shut down into starvation mode.

Most people who start with a healthy breakfast will have more energy to work out later in the day as well...and between your ability to control your cravings and the increased energy to put towards more effective work outs, your waist line will surely thank you this summer season for that healthy breakfast you took the time to eat in the morning.

Dr. Julie T. Chen is board-certified in internal medicine and fellowship-trained and board-certified in integrative medicine. She has her own medical practice in San Jose, Calif. She is the medical director of corporation wellness at several Silicon Valley-based corporations, is on several medical expert panels of Web sites and nonprofit organizations, is a recurring monthly columnist for several national magazines, and has been featured in radio, newspaper, and magazine interviews. She incorporates various healing modalities into her practice including, but is not limited to, medical acupuncture, Chinese scalp acupuncture, clinical hypnotherapy, strain-counterstrain osteopathic manipulations, and biofeedback. To learn more, visit www.makinghealthyez.com.

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