

[IMAGE]

Three reasons you need to eat breakfast

By Julie T. Chen, MD

Breakfast is considered the most important meal of the day...but do you know why that is?

I use the analogy of a car a lot because we seem to understand cars better than our own body and unfortunately many of us treat our cars better than our own body. Would you ever drive your car then put gas in it? Would you ever drive cross country before giving your car engine oil or coolant water?

If you try to get going with your day without any breakfast, what you are doing is driving your car on an empty tank and not bothering to fill it with fuel until you've driven half way across the city. You wouldn't right? Similarly, eating breakfast ultimately is just you feeding your body fuel before you get going with your long 'to-do' list for the day.

After a full night of fasting while you are asleep, your body's metabolism needs a wake-up call with a meal to break the fast (hence it's called breakfast). This way, your metabolism starts churning and this meal establishes your cravings, metabolism, energy, and mood for the rest of the day.

How many times have you had a starch-heavy breakfast then you feel sluggish and you are no longer motivated to get going? That's why I usually recommend a protein-rich breakfast with vegetables as your carbohydrate start for the day. In my opinion, an egg white omelet with vegetables without cheese is a great high protein, low sugar, low saturated fat option to start the day. It provides the protein and nutrients needed to get going.

breakfast - Copyright â Stock Photo / Register Mark When it comes down to it, the main reasons you should eat breakfast come down to these three:

1. Missing breakfast usually leads to more fatigue later in the day because your body has had to run on empty for a while and that stresses out your body more.
2. What type of breakfast you have will set the tone of your energy, mood, cravings and metabolism for the rest of the day. So, if you don't eat breakfast, you will be starving later in the day and end up eating foods you'll regret. Eating a healthy breakfast will keep you going in a healthy direction the rest of the

day.

3. You will have a harder time concentrating and thinking since your brain needs nutrients to function optimally if you miss breakfast. In order to have a productive work day, you need to have breakfast so you can be at your sharpest at work.

Having a hearty breakfast will ensure your ability to keep going throughout your day no matter how hectic it is. It is very common to hear my patients from my clinic of integrative medicine in San Jose CA tell me that their energy has been so much better since changing their breakfast to less starches in the morning. So, what you eat at breakfast does in fact matter in how your day turns out. It sets the mode in which your body's many organs and parts get into gear for the rest of the day.

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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