



Importance of Sleep and Breakfast

Sleep and breakfast every morning are two of the biggest aspects of a healthy lifestyle that people push to the back burner and forget about. Why is this the case? “You can sleep when you are dead” and there is never enough time in the morning to prepare a healthy, sustainable breakfast, right? This is not the case. Sleep and a healthy breakfast are SO important to leading a healthier lifestyle. Follow a few of the tips and tricks below to get better sleep and ensure you are fueled for the day with a healthy breakfast in the morning.

SLEEP



Did you know we spend a third of our lives sleeping? That’s about 26 years of sleeping in an average lifetime. Sleep is an important aspect of creating a good daily routine. Quality and quantity are both important when it comes to sleep. Without enough sleep your body isn’t able to function properly. Research shows you are at increased risk for high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, obesity and several other disorders that can be avoided with quality amounts of sleep.

The Sleep Stages

- Stage 1- This stage is the first stage from awake to sleeping. This is a short period of sleep time usually only lasting several minutes. During this stage, you are sleeping very light; heartbeat, eye movements and breathing slow down. In turn, your brain waves begin to slow down as well.
- Stage 2- This stage is the period of light sleep before you enter deep sleep. Your muscles, heart beat and breathing continue to slow and you relax even deeper. You often spend more time in this stage than stage 1. Brain waves are marked by surges in electrical activity. All eye movements cease and your body temperature drops.
- Stage 3- This stage is the deep sleep stage. It allows you to feel refreshed and awake in the morning. It lasts longer in the first half of your night, and you’re the most relaxed and your breathing is at its lowest point. Brain waves continue to slow down.
- REM Sleep- Dreaming is dominated during this stage. Often times your arm and leg muscles temporarily become paralyzed, so you aren’t able to act out your dreams. Your eyes twitch side to side and your brain activity increases. In addition your blood pressure, breathing and pulse elevate to near waking levels.

How much Sleep do you need? Tips to getting better sleep.

Even though the amount of sleep required for each of us to have a productive day may vary, researchers have found most adults need between 7 and 9 hours of sleep a night. As society continues to change we see people getting less and less sleep, but that can be costly. Insufficient sleep has been linked to a variety of diseases and medical conditions. Although scientists are still researching the connections between sleep and disease, most experts agree getting enough high-quality sleep may be as important to health and well-being as nutrition and exercise.

How many hours of sleep are you getting a night? Follow a few of these tips to help improve your sleep or help yourself get more sleep at night.

- Stick to a sleep schedule-even on the weekend.
- Avoid naps if you are having trouble sleeping at night.
- Exercise daily.
- Practice a relaxing bedtime ritual-read a book or listen to soft music.
- Wind down and relax a few hours before bedtime.
- Avoid cigarettes, alcohol and big meals before bed.

BREAKFAST

Breakfast is often overlooked when it comes to a healthy lifestyle. It is important to choose a breakfast high in protein and low in sugar. That means staying away from donuts, pastries and sugary coffees. Sugary options are good to treat yourself with every once in a while but stay away from enjoying them every day. Research recommends 30 grams of protein at breakfast. Protein will promote weight loss, decrease food cravings, help you feel full longer, and increase your metabolism. Below are a few good options to a high protein breakfast-

- Cottage cheese
- Greek yogurt
- Eggs
- Milk
- Peanut butter
- Oatmeal
- Bacon, ham or sausage



Breakfast is important as it kick starts your metabolism, helping jump start your calorie burning and gives you energy to accomplish your goals for the day. What are some of your favorite breakfast options? How are you able to save time in the morning while still getting your protein in early? Remember to plan ahead to save time, wake up earlier if you need more time in the morning and avoid highly processed, sugary items for breakfast.

PEANUT BUTTER OVERNIGHT OATS (5 INGREDIENTS!)

EASY peanut butter overnight oats made with just 5 ingredients and 5 minutes prep time. Naturally sweetened, vegan, gluten-free, and so delicious.

PREP TIME 6 hours 5 minutes

TOTAL TIME 6 hours 5 minutes

Freezer Friendly No

Does it keep? 2-3 Days

Author: Minimalist Baker

Ingredients

1/2 cup [unsweetened plain almond milk](#) (or other dairy-free milks, such as coconut, soy, or hemp!)

3/4 Tbsp. [chia seeds](#)

2 Tbsp. natural salted peanut butter or almond butter (creamy or crunchy // or sub other nut or seed butter)

1 Tbsp. maple syrup (or sub coconut sugar, organic brown sugar, or stevia to taste)

1/2 cup gluten-free rolled oats (rolled oats are best, vs. steel cut or quick cooking)



TOPPINGS *optional*

- Sliced banana, strawberries, or raspberries
- Flaxseed meal or additional chia seed

Instructions

1. To a mason jar or small bowl with a lid, add almond milk, chia seeds, peanut butter, and maple syrup (or other sweetener) and stir with a spoon to combine. The peanut butter doesn't need to be completely mixed with the almond milk (doing so leaves swirls of peanut butter to enjoy the next day).
2. Add oats and stir a few more times. Then **press down with a spoon to ensure all oats have been moistened and are immersed in almond milk.**
3. Cover securely with a lid or seal and set in the refrigerator overnight (or for at least 6 hours) to set/soak.
4. The next day, open and enjoy as is or garnish with desired toppings (see options above). See more flavor/topping suggestions in the blog post above!

OPTIONAL: You can also heat your oats in the microwave for 45-60 seconds (just ensure there's enough room at the top of your jar to allow for expansion and prevent overflow), or transfer oats to a saucepan and heat over medium heat until warmed through. Add more liquid as needed if oats get too thick/dry.

Overnight oats will keep in the refrigerator for 2-3 days, though best within the first 12-24 hours in our experience. Not freezer friendly.

Additional Resources:

<https://www.sleepfoundation.org/articles/healthy-sleep-tips>

<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/Disorders/Patient-Caregiver-Education/Understanding-Sleep>

<https://minimalistbaker.com/peanut-butter-overnight-oats/>

<https://www.webmd.com/food-recipes/breakfast-lose-weight#1>

<https://livesmartcolorado.colostate.edu/?s=breakfast>





AHW Lesson Activities

Breakfast and Sleep

“Applying the Lesson”

Choose one of the following activities to apply what you learned about your health and your healthy goal setting. Write a short paragraph (3 to 5 sentences) to describe what you did and learned from the activity selected. Report your Applying the Lesson results by Online form, email, fax or hard copy to your county Extension Office.

Option 1: Think about your sleeping habits. Are you meeting the 7-9 recommended hours a night? If you have trouble sleeping, how are you going to improve the quality and amount of sleep you are getting?

Option 2: Track your food and beverage breakfast intake for 5 days. What did you discover about foods you eat and beverages you drink at breakfast? What, if any, improvements related to the areas of advice in the lesson (high protein, low sugar, processed etc.) would you like to work on?

Option 3: Think about a healthy breakfast option you enjoy. Create a recipe for this breakfast item. Is it high in protein and avoids added sugar?