

## Library>Report: What to eat for breakfast and snacks

### What to eat for breakfast and snacks

When you wake up, your blood sugar is low because you haven't eaten for hours, so you need to give your body some fuel unless you're purposely fasting. This could be a low-GL breakfast such as eggs with oatcakes or Scandinavian-style rye bread (pumpernickel), or perhaps porridge oats with chia seeds and berries.

Some people think that they will eat less and lose weight if they avoid eating throughout the morning; however, this idea has been put to the test and not found to be true. One group of volunteers ate three meals and two snacks at the traditional times, while another ate exactly the same food between noon and 11pm. The delayed eaters gained more weight and had a less healthy metabolism.<sup>1</sup> Another study found that establishing a routine in which you eat at regular intervals throughout the daylight hours allows your metabolism to adjust and provide all the energy you need.<sup>2</sup>

If you struggle with fluctuating energy levels, therefore, and you tend to fall asleep during the day, or if you find it difficult to lose weight, switch to the daily regime of three meals and two snacks. This will help you to avoid an all-too-familiar scenario: you try to prop yourself up with liquid stimulants (coffee or tea), nicotine or instant sugar in the form of a piece of toast or a croissant, but the resolve to go without food still weakens as your blood sugar dips lower and lower. Finally, you buckle under the strain and end up bingeing on high-GL foods.

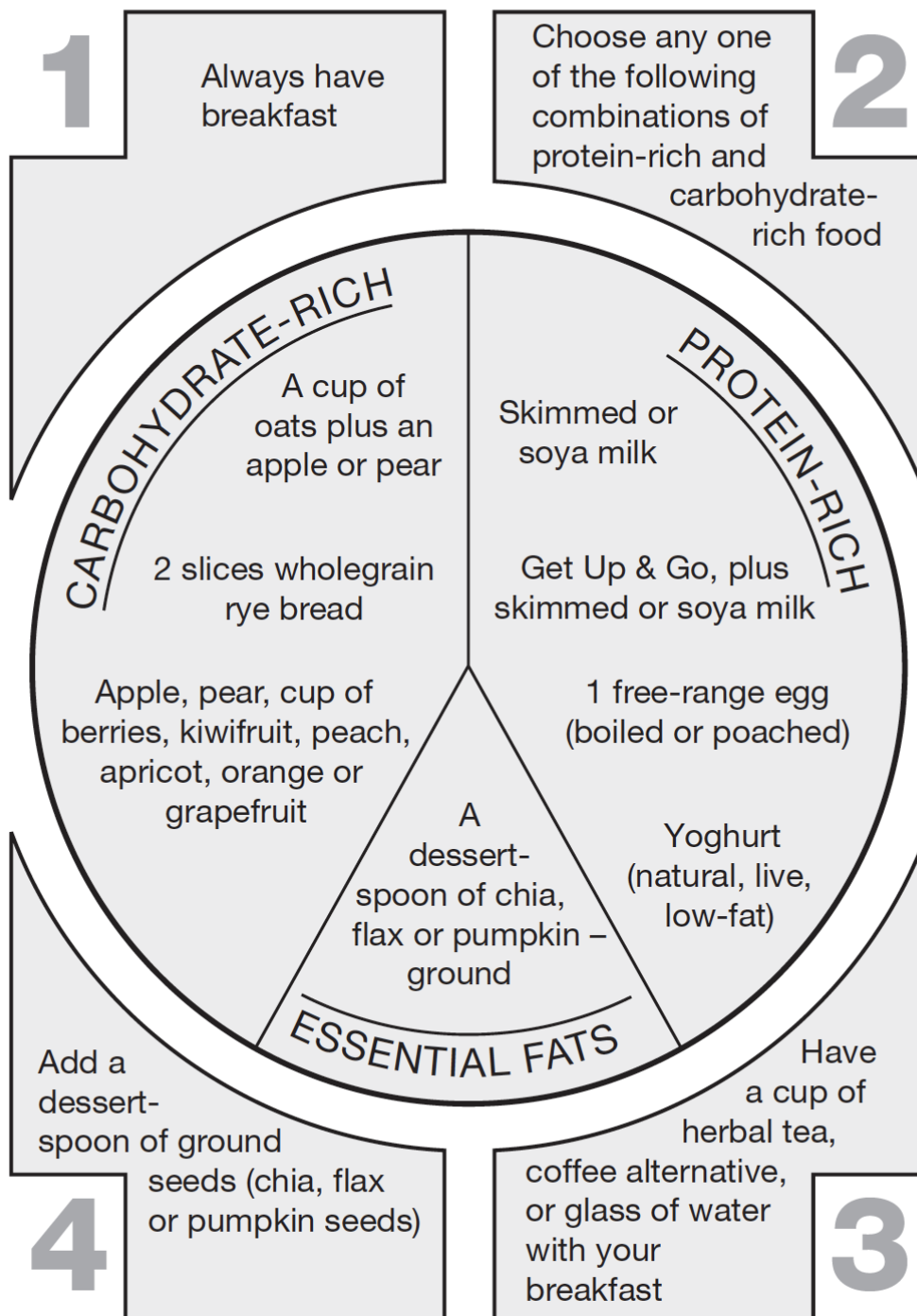
This is why you must eat a healthy breakfast. But what should you eat and how much? Nutritionists gave one group of children a low-GL breakfast and another group a high-GL breakfast, then allowed both groups free access to a buffet lunch. Although both groups declared that they were satisfied immediately after breakfast, at lunchtime the high-GL group were hungrier and ate more food.<sup>3</sup> Another study reported exactly the same result in adults.<sup>4</sup>

The message is clear: eat a low-GL breakfast. It will satisfy you for longer by keeping your blood sugar more stable, so you will eat less later. There are two ways to do this:

[NL]1 Simply choose any of the low-GL breakfasts starting on page 000. Each of these gives you sufficient protein and essential fats but no more than 10 GL of carbs.

2 Alternatively, 'do it yourself', using the chart below as a guide.

# Low-GL breakfast guidelines



## Low-GL breakfast guidelines

The following breakfasts will give you the perfect balance of carbohydrate and protein:

### Low-GL breakfasts

Carbohydrates	+	Protein
Cereal/fruit	+	Seeds/yoghurt/milk
Fruit	+	Yoghurt/seeds
Fruit	+	Get Up & Go with CarboSlow/milk
Bread/toast	+	Egg
Bread/toast	+	Fish (such as kippers)

### Cereal breakfasts

If you prefer a more traditional cereal-, fruit- or toast-based breakfast, there are a few points to consider.

First, any cereal-based breakfast must include a low-GL cereal and low-GL fruit as a sweetener, plus sufficient protein and essential fats. Remember, the goal is to consume no more than 10 GL. If you don't need to lose weight, you can increase the carb portion to 15 GL. In practical terms, just make sure your portions of the breakfasts below fill you up.

Each of the portions in the table below provides 5 GL. (Think 5GL for the cereal and 5GL for the fruit.) As you can see, the best 'value', in terms of satisfying your hunger, are oat flakes, either cooked (as in porridge) or eaten raw (like cornflakes). Basically, you can eat as much as you like, given that two servings will fill up anybody.

### CEREAL BREAKFASTS

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<b>Cereal</b>	<b>Serving size</b>
Oat flakes	2 servings or small cups (120g)
All-Bran	1 serving (½ bowl or 1 cup)
Unsweetened muesli	1 small serving (less than ½ bowl or ¾ cup)
Alpen	½ serving (¼ bowl or ½ cup)
Raisin Bran	½ serving (¼ bowl or ½ cup)
Weetabix	1 biscuit

Tip: Adding a spoonful of chia seeds (protein) will further lower the GL of the meal. You can also soak chia seeds with oats overnight in milk or plant-based milk and have as a cold oat/chia porridge in the morning.

[FO]Obviously, these cereals can be quite dull on their own, so you might want to consider adding fruit. Again, each of the portions in the table below is equivalent to 5 GL.

### LOW-GL FRUITS

{typesetter: please set as a table}

<b>Fruit</b>	<b>Serving size</b>
Berries	1 large punnet
Pear	1
Grapefruit	1
Apple	1 small (fits into the palm of your hand)
Peach	1 small
Banana	Less than half

[FO]To keep hunger at bay, your best option would be porridge (or raw oat flakes) with as many berries as you could eat. Alternatively, you could have half a bowl of All-Bran and a grapefruit, or half a bowl of unsweetened muesli with a small apple. As far as protein is concerned, there is some in both milk and soya milk (but always pick the unsweetened kind). Rice milk is high GL so it is best avoided. Oat milk is not bad, but not as good as soya. Yoghurt (unsweetened and well fermented, which gives it a bitter taste) is roughly the same as milk or soya milk, so feel free to have a spoonful on your cereal.

Seeds are another good source of protein, and they also contain countless vitamins, minerals, essential fats and fibre. I recommend a tablespoon of ground seeds or chopped nuts on your cereal. Ground chia seeds are the best choice, because they are high in both protein and soluble fibre. Also, you don't have to grind them because they have a soft outer husk. If you leave your cereal and chia for a few minutes, the seeds will soften and be less crunchy when you eat them. Flax seeds are the next best option, but they are not as tasty. Pumpkin seeds are good, too, and high in magnesium.

The best cereal-based breakfast is Low-GL Granola, which is made by mixing half oat flakes with Lizi's Low-GL Granola (purchased), ground seeds and fresh berries (see page 000). One serving (8 GL) is completely satisfying.

#### Get Up & Go with Carboslow Breakfasts

Get Up & Go is a delicious powder made from a variety of whole foods, including quinoa, oats, seeds, almonds and cinnamon, with lots of added vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C (1,000mg per portion), B vitamins and chromium (50mcg per portion), all of which are essential for a healthy metabolism. Simply add a scoop of Get Up & Go to two cups of milk, nut milk or, if you really want to go low carb pick carb-free almond milk and a handful of berries. (Frozen berries defrost almost instantly in a blender.)

It's guaranteed to fill you up until lunchtime, yet each serving is only 283 calories and 5 GL, so you could blend it with 5 GL of strawberries, raspberries, pear or blackcurrants for a healthy, balanced breakfast. A teaspoon of cinnamon will make this shake extra tasty.

Get Up & Go includes 1g of super-soluble glucomannan fibre, the most super soluble fibre of all, in each serving. Glucomannan, which you can buy separately in health food shops and have a teaspoon with a large glass of water before a meal, lowers the GL of your meal and makes you feel fuller for longer. A serving of Get Up & Go with CarboSlow, plus berries and carb-free almond milk, is just 6 GL (or 8 GL if you use oat milk).

#### Yoghurt breakfasts

If you are especially fond of yoghurt, you could dispense with the cereal and just have yoghurt, fruit and seeds. Each of the following portions provides about 5 GL, assuming that a small pot is 150g:

#### YOGHURT

{typesetter: please set as a table}

##### **Yoghurt**

Plain yoghurt

Non-fat yoghurt

##### **Serving size**

2 small pots, 300g

2 small pots, 300g

Low-fat yoghurt with added fruit and sugar  $\frac{2}{3}$  small pot, 100g

Providing you choose a yoghurt that has no added sugar, you can eat two small pots, sweeten it with any of the fruits from the previous table and add a tablespoon of ground seeds. There is absolutely no need to go for the low-fat option.

#### Egg and toast breakfasts

Half the calories in every egg come from fat, but the type of fat depends on what the chicken has been fed; for example, eggs from intensively reared chickens are high in saturated fat. Fortunately, though, most free-range chickens are fed much healthier diets that provide a healthier balance of fats.

Unsurprisingly, omega-3-rich free-range or organic eggs are much better for you than ordinary eggs, but I still recommend that you eat no more than six of these a week; for example, you could have either two small or one large egg for breakfast every other day. Poach, boil or scramble them, because the high heat of frying damages the essential fats.

As eggs are pure protein and fat (and therefore 0 GL), you could combine them with any of the following, all of which provide 10 GL of carbs:

#### BREADS AND OATCAKES

{typesetter: please set as a table}

Food	Serving size	
	10GL	15GL
Oatcakes	4	6
Pumpernickel	2 thin slices	3 thin slices
Sourdough rye bread	2 thin slices	2 slices
Wholemeal rye bread (yeasted)	1 slice	1.5 slices
Wholemeal wheat bread (yeasted)	1 slice	1.5 slices

Even high-fibre white bread is best avoided, as just one slice would see you exceeding your breakfast allowance of 10 GL. We recommend oatcakes, Scandinavian-style pumpernickel, sonnenbrot- or volkenbrot-type breads, or yeast-free sourdough rye bread instead. All sourdough breads are substantial, flavoursome and high in fibre. By contrast, light, white, fluffy ‘fake’ breads are full of air, super-refined and nutritionally inferior. My simple rule of thumb is the squish factor: the squishier the bread the higher the GL.

Making the switch to ‘real’ bread might be a bit of a shock at first, but you’ll soon discover that they are much more satisfying as well as healthier. Real breads are sometimes made from grains that are genetically simpler than the modern alternatives because they are not the result of decades of hybridisation. The flour is coarsely (stone) ground, which delays the release of sugars and therefore lowers the GL score, and it has far fewer additives than fake flours. An added advantage of sourdough is that it is made without yeast. There is also growing evidence that sourdough fermentation may break down gluten.<sup>5</sup> Although the gluten in modern wheat has been widely condemned, ancient wheats, such as kamut khorosan wheat, are actually anti-inflammatory, even though they contain gluten. This leads to the inevitable conclusion that something else in modern wheat must be triggering all those immune

reactions. The ill effects can't be due to gluten alone. There is little or no evidence to support the extreme view that 'all grains are poison', and, as usual, the plot thickens with every new piece of research.

Moreover, some grains are healthier than others because of the type of carbohydrate they contain. Oats are best, followed by barley and rye. Whereas the GL of wheat varies widely depending on cooking time, oats are much more consistent. Whole oat flakes, rolled oats and oatmeal (which is used to make oatcakes) are all low GL.<sup>6</sup> (You can lower the GL of porridge by leaving it to cool before eating – if you happen to like cold porridge!) Pick rough or jumbo oatcakes as opposed to fine, as these contain more soluble fibre, which reduces the glycaemic load. Oat pancakes, made by grinding oat flakes in a coffee/seed grinder and combining with egg and milk, are another tasty option.

#### Fishy breakfasts

Although they have gone out of fashion, kippers (smoked herring) make a tasty and highly nutritious low-GL breakfast. Rich in protein and omega-3 fats, a single kipper and any of the bread portions in the previous table will meet all your protein and fat needs and keep you below the 10–15 GL target.

#### What to eat for snacks

Grazing (eating little and often) is healthier than gorging (eating one or two big meals per day) because it helps to keep your blood sugar even.<sup>7</sup> This makes overeating far less likely, as you will never experience between-meal hunger pangs. For this reason, I recommend a mid-morning and a late-afternoon snack. Of these two the late afternoon snack is most important due to the resistance factor: psychologists tell us that we spend a lot of energy during the day resisting things, and that resistance is like a muscle that gets tired. If you add low blood sugar and a glass of wine to the mix, which further lower resistance, you are inevitably going to do the wrong thing in the evening and go on a binge or choose the wrong foods for dinner. By having a late-afternoon snack before you come home from work you're more likely to stick to the programme.

Each snack should be no more than 5 GL plus some protein, so fruit combined with nuts or seeds is a good option. The fruit portions in the table below all provide 5 GL:

[typesetter: please set as a table]

<b>Fruit</b>	<b>Serving size</b>
Strawberries	1 large punnet
Plums	4
Cherries	1 small punnet
Pear	1
Grapefruit	1
Orange	1
Apple	1 small (fits into the palm of your hand)
Peach	1 small
Melon/watermelon	1 slice

Berries – such as raspberries, blueberries and blackberries – plums and cherries are the best fruit snacks when it comes to GL value. You can lower the GL of all these fruits by eating them with half a dozen almonds or other nuts or a tablespoon of pumpkin seeds. Almonds have the highest protein-to-calories ratio of any nut apart from chestnuts. Pumpkin seeds contain even more protein, and they are also a good source of omega-3 fats, as are walnuts and pecan nuts. Half an apple with a few almonds, pecan nuts or walnuts is a perfect snack. If you travel a lot, apples and almonds are easy snacks to have on the move.

Real ‘unsquishable’ bread such as Scandinavian style volkenbrot or wholegrain sourdough rye bread and a protein-rich spread, such as cottage cheese, hummus, taramasalata, or almond or peanut butter, is another good snack option. Simply halve the bread servings in the table on page xxx for an indication of 5 GL portions. Hummus tastes especially good with oatcakes, or have it on rye bread or with a raw carrot. (Even a large carrot is less than 5 GL.) Oatcakes, and indeed oats in general, are great for weight loss and controlling blood sugar.<sup>8</sup> However, you should avoid any products that contain added sugar. A much better option is a sugar-free, organic oatcake, made with palm fruit oil (unsaturated fat) rather than palm oil (saturated fat) – try Nairn’s brand. If you like peanut butter, buy the kind with no added sugar. Or you could have sugar-free baked beans on toast.

All these snacks are 5 GL:

- A thin slice of rye bread/two oatcakes plus  $\frac{1}{2}$  small tub of cottage cheese (150g).
- A thin slice of rye bread/two oatcakes plus  $\frac{1}{3}$  small tub of hummus or taramasalata (100g).
- A thin slice of rye bread/two oatcakes and peanut butter.
- Crudités (sliced carrot, pepper, cucumber or celery) and hummus.
- Crudités and cottage cheese, hummus or taramasalata.
- A small dairy or coconut yoghurt with no added sugar (150g), plus berries.

If you would prefer something hot, a satisfying bowl of Chestnut and Butter Bean Soup (see Recipes in your Library) is just 4 GL.

As you can see, you won’t be bored between meals, as there’s plenty of scope for mixing and matching.