

Off To A Good Start

7 good-for-you breakfast components



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Somehow the summer has flown by, and back-to-school season is upon us. A new school year brings with it the excitement of a fresh start. One way to capitalize on this excitement and set our kids (and ourselves) up for success is to prioritize breakfast, often referred to as the most important meal of the day. By eating breakfast, we fuel and equip ourselves and our children for an even more productive and successful day.

Below are 7 breakfast component ideas that fit a variety of ages and schedules.



Egg muffin

The egg muffin is essentially taking the omelet or scrambled egg mixture you would cook in a pan on the stove and pouring it instead into a muffin tin to bake into muffins. This easy-to-eat meal can be customized to be as simple as just eggs with seasoning or more elaborate, with vegetables and/or cheese in the mix. (Check out the Levines' recipe in this issue for some inspo!) Keep this quick breakfast component in the fridge or freezer, and just pop into the microwave or toaster oven to reheat.



Healthy muffin

The term “healthy muffin” can be used loosely. While I generally recommend that people enjoy desserts (in moderation) in their original recipe without being too concerned about nutritional and caloric value, if these are consumed on a more consistent and frequent basis, I recommend opting for ingredients that are more nourishing. Ingredients or ingredient swaps such as applesauce (instead of or to minimize oil), whole grain flour (instead of white flour), and higher protein components like Greek yogurt typically correspond to a healthy (or healthier) muffin.



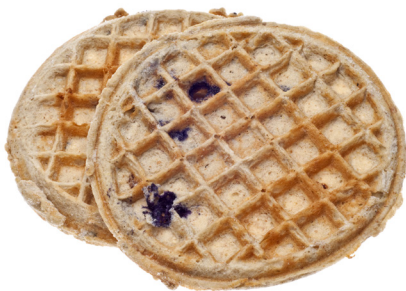
Yogurt parfait

One of the quickest grab-and-go (or sit-and-relax) breakfasts, and also one of my personal favorites, a yogurt parfait is simply yogurt mixed with fruit and a grain. Mix-in ideas include granola (homemade or store-bought); cereal; fresh, frozen, or dried fruit; and even some nuts or seeds.



Oatmeal or overnight oats

Enjoy warm and cozy oatmeal for a filling and nourishing breakfast during the cooler days and change it up with cold and chewy overnight oats as the outside temperatures rise. Overnight oats are raw oats that have been soaked overnight in liquid (such as milk, milk alternative, or yogurt). You can also add nut butters and fruit to balance out the nutritional value and increase the satiety factor.



Whole grain waffle

Frozen waffles are a staple in many homes—they are convenient, kid friendly, and make a great breakfast component! It is ideal to opt for a whole grain option that is higher in fiber and therefore more filling and more beneficial for the body (think heart and digestive health). Consider adding a protein such as cottage cheese, yogurt, an egg, or even a slice of cheese to round it out for a well-balanced breakfast.



Cereal and milk

A classic, but worth mentioning, cereal and milk is quick and easy and can be prepared by most ages with minimal cleanup. When choosing cereals, keep in mind the fiber and sugar content—higher fiber and lower sugar are more ideal for frequent consumption. In our house, we save the high-sugar and low-fiber cereals for Shabbos.

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Smoothie

While getting the blender out (and then cleaning it!) does take a little bit more effort and energy, it can be very worthwhile for at least once in a while. This refreshing option is packed with vitamins, minerals, fiber, water, and excitement. Consider using any fresh fruit you'd like to "get rid of" because it is becoming extra ripe, and/or use frozen fruit. Mix in some liquid such as milk, milk alternative, water, or yogurt, and blend! You can also add in some nut butter and nuts or seeds for additional texture and protein.

"Produce Prescriptions" Could Save Billions of Dollars in Medical Bills

A healthy diet and lifestyle typically include eating a variety of fruits and vegetables. However, sometimes there are obstacles, such as food insecurity, which could make this more of a challenge. Food insecurity is defined by Oxford dictionary as "the condition of not having access to sufficient food or food of an adequate quality, to meet one's basic needs." The concept of a "produce prescription" involves specific individuals being provided with free or discounted produce.

A new study from the Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy at Tufts University in Boston recommends having a produce prescription program for food-insecure individuals with diabetes and diet-related conditions. They share that this strategy can result in significant health benefits as well as billions of dollars saved in healthcare costs. The researchers estimated that a national program for people with diabetes and food insecurity between the ages of 40–79 could prevent 296,000 cases of cardiovascular diseases, such as strokes and heart attacks. Regardless of whether these programs will take place or not, these findings further support increasing the amount of fruits and vegetables that we eat.

Omega-3 Fatty Acids May Help Maintain Lung Health

Omega-3 fatty acids are found in cold-water fatty fish (such as salmon and tuna), nuts and seeds (such as flaxseeds, walnuts, and chia seeds), and plant oils (such as soybean oil and canola oil). They are most commonly known for benefiting heart health, and new research suggests that they may be helpful for lung health as well.

A recent study partially funded by the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute (NHLBI), part of the NIH, with results published in the American Journal of Respiratory and Critical Care Medicine, suggests that omega-3 fatty acids can help maintain lung health.

Researchers studied two different cohorts to come to their conclusion. The first group included 15,063 Americans from the NHLBI Pooled Cohorts Study; this showed that higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids in an individual's blood were observed with a reduced risk of lung-function decline. The second part of the study included a genetic data analysis of over 500,000 European patients from the UK Biobank. One of the outcomes of the analysis was that higher levels of omega-3 fatty acids were linked to better lung function. The researchers hypothesized that the connection is related to the anti-inflammatory properties of omega-3 fatty acids and concluded that further research is needed before concrete recommendations can be determined. However, the current recommendation by the USDA's Dietary Guidelines for Americans is for people to consume at least two servings of fish per week.



APPLE STRUDEL CIGARS

BY BAT-EL GERSHOWITZ | YIELDS 4 SERVINGS

This fragrant and deliciously sweet (yet healthy!) apple strudel packed with real apples makes the perfect Rosh Hashana dessert. Serve up a warm slice with some ice cream — Mmmm!

INGREDIENTS

3-4 big gala apples, peeled and grated

1 tablespoon cinnamon, plus extra to sprinkle on top

½ pack phyllo dough, defrost acc. to package directions

2 tablespoons **Heaven & Earth Date Sugar**, plus additional for sprinkling

1 tablespoon cornstarch
cooking spray



DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Place the grated apples in a pan. Add the date sugar, cinnamon, and cornstarch. Cook on medium heat until all liquids are evaporated. Let cool for 10 minutes or so.
2. Remove two phyllo sheets at a time and place a full tablespoon of the apple filling on the top center of the dough. Roll the dough once, then fold the edges (just like an eggroll) and start rolling. At the middle point, use some cooking spray and finish rolling the cigar until done.
3. Repeat with remaining phyllo dough until the apple mixture is finished. Place all the rolls on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper.
4. Spray or brush the rolls with oil and sprinkle some **Heaven & Earth Date Sugar** and cinnamon on top.
5. Place in oven and bake for about 30 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and serve immediately.

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