

Breakfast Like a King?

Dear Dr. Lee,
I've heard that a person should eat a large breakfast. What's the healthiest breakfast, and why?

— Antonia, Toronto, Canada



Dear Antonia,
There's an old saying: "Breakfast like a king, lunch like a prince, and dine like a poor man." In most countries, dinner is the biggest meal of the day. So why does this saying tell us to eat a large breakfast instead?

The answer is in the word "breakfast" itself. It means the "breaking" of a "fast," or a long period without eating. The time between dinner and breakfast can be more than twelve hours, so the meal that breaks your fast is very important. It should be healthy and nutritious. Also, unlike your evening meal, the food you consume for breakfast gives you the energy you need during the most active part of your day. Researchers have found evidence that eating a big breakfast can improve your **concentration** and **mood**, and **boost** your energy level.

Experts agree that it's important to eat a good breakfast, and to have your main meal earlier in the day. However, not enough people are **heeding** their advice. In the U.S., for example, many people skip breakfast or have only a cup of coffee in the morning. About two-thirds of the population still have their main meal in the evening. Many popular dinner foods, such as steak and French fries, are heavy in fat, which makes people feel **lethargic**.

Other countries follow healthier patterns of eating. In Mexico, families generally have a light breakfast, and eat their largest meal at 2 p.m. It might include an appetizer, soup, pasta, fish, meat with a salad, dessert, and finally tea or coffee. In Switzerland, the main meal is also eaten in the middle of the day, and usually contains a lot of fresh vegetables and fruits; the Swiss **generally** eat meat only two or three times a week.

The best breakfast is one that contains plenty of protein and carbohydrates to give you the energy for your daily activities. Two examples of such a breakfast are eggs and whole wheat toast, or cereal with milk. Of course, there are many different kinds of healthy breakfasts. In Japan, people like to have rice, soup, and an egg in the morning; a typical Arab breakfast is bread, cheese, and olives. There are many **wholesome** foods you can choose—the important thing is to start your day with breakfast, and get the nutrition you need.

Reading Passage:

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