



BREAKFAST AND ADHD

(A GUIDE)

Breakfast is often thought to be the most important meal of the day. Studies have shown that eating a healthy breakfast can help to control weight and be the source of essential nutrients. Children with ADHD who are on medication should always have breakfast as it will give their concentration a natural boost and make the medication more effective. It can also reduce the risk of side effects and compensate for loss of appetite later in the day.

Breakfast routine

Although not all children are hungry when they wake up, breakfast routines should still be encouraged. Try the following tips:

- 🚩 Set a **good example** by making sure that everyone in the household has **breakfast**.
- 🚩 Go for **simple, quick** and **nutritious** options.
- 🚩 Get the child to **choose their breakfast** the **night before** and lay the table.
- 🚩 Allow **time** in the morning to eat breakfast.
- 🚩 Use sticker charts/token systems to **reward** if the child is reluctant.
- 🚩 Keep to the **routine** over **weekends** and **holidays**.
- 🚩 Have **similar routines** in different home settings.





Foods to include

Aim for a balance of foods which the child enjoys and is not allergic to:

- 🚩 **Grains** - wholegrain bread, muffins, bagels, pancakes, porridge, Weetabix, Shredded Wheat or muesli.
- 🚩 **Protein** - eggs, baked beans, occasional meat (such as sausage or bacon), nuts and seeds.
- 🚩 **Dairy produce** - full fat milk, cheese, full fat natural yoghurt.
- 🚩 **Fruit and vegetables** - this can be fresh, tinned, dried or frozen.

Try to avoid cereals and other foods marketed towards children. They are often very high in sugar and salt. If your child will only eat these, try mixing with healthy substitutes. Offer fruit juice in small amounts as it is high in sugar and acidic, which is bad for teeth.

Breakfast ideas

- 🚩 Buttered toast with peanut butter, marmite, honey, marmalade or jam.
- 🚩 Cereals topped with yoghurt or fruit.
- 🚩 Baked beans on toast sprinkled with grated cheese.
- 🚩 Cheese on toast.
- 🚩 Bacon sandwich.
- 🚩 Boiled egg with buttered toast soldiers.
- 🚩 Scrambled egg with added cheese, tomatoes, ham or mushrooms.
- 🚩 Poached egg on toast.
- 🚩 Homemade milkshake (eg banana or strawberry).
- 🚩 Homemade smoothies (eg mango or blueberry).
- 🚩 Glass of full fat milk.

Ideally a balanced breakfast should provide between 20-25% of daily calories as a rough guide.

More ideas and information

www.change4life.co.uk

www.nhs.uk

