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Morning STARS

Start your day off on the right foot with these healthy breakfast recipes

BY KERRI-ANN JENNINGS

You've heard breakfast is the most important meal of the day, and that's especially true when you have type 2 diabetes. A healthy breakfast can help you control your weight and keep blood sugar stable, according to Melissa Joy Dobbins, RD, a Chicago-based certified diabetes educator. What should your focus be for the first meal of the day? When you have diabetes, it's key to keep total carbs consistent day to day, increase fiber, choose fewer processed foods, and make heart-healthy choices, Dobbins says.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY LEIGH BEISCH

FOOD STYLING BY DAN BECKER

PROP STYLING BY GLENN JENKINS

High-Protein Chocolate-Chip Raspberry Pancakes

Protein-rich nonfat cottage cheese stands in for ricotta in these light, custardy pancakes. Adding raspberries, chocolate chips, and orange zest makes them elegant and weekend-worthy (raspberries also lend this recipe 3 grams of fiber per serving). Round out this special breakfast with two strips of turkey bacon per person, and your meal will still clock in at just 300 calories.

Makes 4 servings (about four small pancakes per person)

Ingredients

1½ cups nonfat cottage cheese
4 eggs, lightly beaten
¼ tsp vanilla extract
1 tsp orange zest (optional)
1 tbsp sugar
½ cup whole wheat pastry flour
2 tbsp chocolate chips
Nonstick cooking spray
1½ cups raspberries, fresh or frozen

Directions

1. In a food processor, blend cottage cheese, eggs, vanilla extract, orange zest, if using, and sugar until smooth.
2. Add whole wheat pastry flour and chocolate chips and pulse 2–3 times or until flour is just incorporated (don't overmix).
3. Spray a large nonstick skillet with cooking spray and heat over medium heat. When pan is hot enough, pour pancake batter in ¼-cup servings.
4. When pancakes start to bubble, scatter raspberries over top, and flip to cook the other side, about 1 minute.

Per serving

261 calories, 20 g protein, 26 g carbohydrate, 8 g fat (4 g saturated fat), 172 mg cholesterol, 410 mg sodium, 5 g fiber, 9 g sugar. Calories from fat: 28%

Not going overboard on carbs in the morning can be a challenge since traditional breakfast foods tend to be carbohydrate-heavy (think cereal, milk, yogurt, waffles, granola, and fruit). Exactly how many grams of carbohydrates should you aim for? It depends

on your individual calorie needs, but about 30 to 45 grams is generally a safe range at breakfast (some people may need less, some more).

The quality of those carbs also matters. Toss out refined grains, such as white toast and pancakes, and replace

them with whole grains, fruit, and low-fat dairy products. Whole grains and fruit will give you extra fiber, which helps control blood sugar, while dairy doubles as a lean protein.

In addition to curbing carbs, make sure you get enough protein. Spreading out your protein intake throughout the day may help you maintain a healthy weight.

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When you have diabetes, it's key to keep carbs consistent day to day, increase fiber, and make heart-healthy choices.



Breakfast Tacos

Who says tacos are just for dinner? This veggie-enhanced twist on the classic breakfast burrito keeps carbs low while maximizing fiber. One whole egg delivers fat-soluble vitamin A, while two extra egg whites boost the protein.

Makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- 2 small corn tortillas
- 2 tbsp unsalted canned black beans
- 1 cup washed spinach or baby spinach
- 1 tsp canola oil
- 1 egg and 2 egg whites, beaten together
- 2 tbsp salsa fresca
- pepper to taste

Directions

1. Place corn tortillas on a toaster-oven tray; top each with 1 tbsp black beans. Heat in a 350-degree toaster oven until tortilla and beans are heated through (they should be ready when other ingredients are done cooking).
2. In a small sauté pan, cook spinach with a little water over medium heat until wilted. Remove from pan, drain excess liquid, and set aside.
3. Add oil to the pan and heat. Add beaten eggs to pan and use a spatula to scramble the eggs.
4. When eggs are done, divide eggs and spinach between the two tortillas. Top with salsa fresca and pepper.

Per serving

285 calories, 18 g protein, 30 g carbohydrate, 11 g fat (2 g saturated fat), 164 mg cholesterol, 410 mg sodium, 5 g fiber, 2 g sugar. Calories from fat: 35%

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It can be tricky to get enough protein at breakfast (most of us don't sit down to a chicken breast or block of tofu in the morning), but Dobbins has some tips. First, home in on main protein sources: egg whites, lean meat (such as Canadian bacon), plain Greek yogurt (which has more protein than regular yogurt), milk, nuts, beans, and reduced-fat cheese. Second, don't forget about the smaller amounts of protein you can get in other foods, such as whole grain breads and vegetables.

The last thing to keep in mind is heart-healthy choices. "Diabetes increases your risk of heart disease, so you want to do everything you can to keep your heart as healthy as possible," Dobbins says. Limit sodium and saturated fat, and add more fiber with whole grains, fruits, and vegetables for a hearty—and heart-healthy—start to the day.

Reviewed by **Brunilda Nazario, MD**
WebMD Lead Medical Editor

Mango-Ginger Smoothie

Nonfat Greek yogurt is an impressive source of lean protein. It makes this smoothie a creamy, satisfying drink that's fat-free and low in sodium. An added bonus: You get an entire cup of fruit in this one drink.

Makes 1 serving

Ingredients

- ½ cup frozen mango chunks
- ½ banana
- 6 oz nonfat plain Greek yogurt
- ¼ cup skim milk
- 1 tsp maple syrup or honey
- ¼ tsp vanilla extract
- 1 tsp freshly grated ginger root (peel before grating)

Directions

Add all ingredients to blender and blend on high until smooth and creamy.

Per serving

230 calories, 20 g protein, 40 g carbohydrate, 0 g fat (0 g saturated fat), 9 mg cholesterol, 113 mg sodium, 3 g fiber, 32 g sugar. Calories from fat: 1%

Home in on main protein sources, including egg whites and lean meats.



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