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## HEALTH & FITNESS

### TOP 5 reasons to eat a healthy breakfast

BY ANGELA DAY

Despite its benefits, breakfast may be the meal most often neglected. Some say they don't feel like eating in the morning, some don't want to gain weight and some say they just don't have the time before or after PT.

But no matter the excuse, your body has ways of reminding you it needs a morning meal. If your stomach growls before lunch, or you feel sluggish, tired or irritable, chances are another cup of coffee won't fix it. What you need is breakfast.

A healthful breakfast is like the difference between a coal fire and a gasoline fire — you want a steady burn, not just a flash. Research has shown that people who eat breakfast on a regular basis have:

- better attitudes at work.

- more strength and endurance.
- steadier weight control.
- better concentration.
- and better problem-solving abilities.

Your body runs off of glucose (also called carbohydrates) throughout the day, and when glucose stores are low, your metabolism slows down — and so do you. So the type of food you eat is just as important as the meal itself. Your first meal of the day should consist of:

- a piece of fruit, which offers Vitamin C, antioxidants, fiber and additional minerals
- an 8 oz. glass of orange juice, which offers Vitamin C to keep your immune system strong and healthy, promotes wound healing

Have questions about nutrition? Topic suggestions? E-mail Stripes health columnist Angela Day at [livefornutrition@googlemail.com](mailto:livefornutrition@googlemail.com)

- a whole-grain or high-fiber cereal or bread, which helps keep you full longer

■ a protein source, which slows down digestion and rebuilds muscles. Low-fat milk, egg whites, a slice of low-fat cheese, peanut butter or turkey bacon are all healthful protein options.

Breakfast food high in sugar such as cinnamon buns, donuts, some cereals, fruit juice or candy should be avoided. They cause your blood sugar and energy levels to rise quickly, and then decrease just as fast. But a healthful breakfast will give you the right kind of energy boost in the morning, and leave you less likely to snack on unhealthy food later.

Angela Day is a licensed dietician and has practiced dietetics since 2005. She is also an Army spouse, currently based in Stuttgart, Germany.