

Healthy Eating

Good Breakfasts: Rise to the Challenge

(NAPS)—If you grab a doughnut for breakfast on the way out the door, “You could be doing better,” says Josie Emunah, research specialist with the University of North Carolina’s Prevention Research Center (PRC).

The center is part of a network of 35 academic and community research partners across the country that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funds to find new ways to keep Americans healthy. Some of the researchers study America’s eating habits.

Emunah says the morning meal should do more than ease hunger. You need nourishment and energy, not extra calories. Going overboard can lead to overweight, which can bring higher risk of serious diseases, especially among minority groups.

“In Alabama, overall, there’s a high rate of obesity and African-American women have the highest rate as a group,” says Connie Kohler, DrPH, a researcher with the University of Alabama PRC. The extra body weight puts these women “at high, high risk,” Dr. Kohler says, of developing diabetes, heart disease and some forms of cancer.

The Alabama PRC is exploring whether residents in a medically underserved, rural area can help their neighbors be nutrition-savvy. The PRC trains community health advisors to be local sources of health information. Dr. Kohler says they also use weekly radio shows and newspaper columns to spread the word on good health.



Joan Orr, a health educator with the Maine-Harvard PRC, says her team of researchers share healthy recipes, eating tips, and sample menus to help families plan, prepare and eat meals together.

“Parents can improve their eating habits while teaching their kids to make healthy food choices,” Orr says. “It’s a lot easier to start a good habit than to break an unhealthy one.”

Try baking a batch of healthy pumpkin muffins and start each day with a smart, prepared breakfast great for a morning on the run. The following recipe comes from a cookbook the North Carolina PRC compiled. You can use fresh or canned pumpkin.

1½ cups white flour
1¼ cups sugar
1tbsp baking powder
¼ tsp salt
1tsp cinnamon
½ tsp each of nutmeg, ginger, allspice
½ tsp of ground cloves
1cup puréed pumpkin
1tsp low-fat yogurt
½ cup low-fat milk
½ cup vegetable oil
2tbsp molasses

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Use baking spray on enough pans for 18 half-cup muffins.

Sift dry ingredients together. In a separate bowl, whisk together wet ingredients, then pour into the dry ones. Stir until just combined.

Fill each muffin cup ¾ full.

Bake 15-20 minutes. The muffins are done when an inserted toothpick can be removed cleanly. Each muffin has about 176 calories.

Tips:

- For added fiber, use half whole-wheat flour. An equal amount of unsweetened applesauce for the oil cuts about 50 calories a muffin.

- If you can sit for a few minutes in the morning, try fruit with low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese.

- If you like cereal bars, look for brands with 3 or 4 grams of fiber per serving. You’ll feel satisfied longer, plus fiber can help control cholesterol and boost digestive health.

For more information about the CDC’s Prevention Research Centers Program, visit www.cdc.gov/prc.

Food Ideas

The experts at a network of academic and community research facilities the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention funds to find new ways to keep Americans healthy say you should start each day with a smart, prepared breakfast. For more information about the program, visit www.cdc.gov/prc.

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