

Egg Nutrition Center



Protein Research

Rampersaud GC, Pereira MA, Girard BL, Adams J, Metz JD. Breakfast habits, nutritional status, body weight, and academic performance in children and adolescents. *J Am Diet Assoc* 2005;105:743-60.

Breakfast has been labeled the most important meal of the day, but are there data to support this claim? We summarized the results of 47 studies examining the association of breakfast consumption with nutritional adequacy (nine studies), body weight (16 studies), and academic performance (22 studies) in children and adolescents. Breakfast skipping is highly prevalent in the United States and Europe (10% to 30%), depending on age group, population, and definition. Although the quality of breakfast was variable within and between studies, children who reported eating breakfast on a consistent basis tended to have superior nutritional profiles than their breakfast-skipping peers. Breakfast eaters generally consumed more daily calories yet were less likely to be overweight, although not all studies associated breakfast skipping with overweight. Evidence suggests that breakfast consumption may improve cognitive function related to memory, test grades, and school attendance. Breakfast as part of a healthful diet and lifestyle can positively impact children's health and well-being. Parents should be encouraged to provide breakfast for their children or explore the availability of a school breakfast program. We advocate consumption of a healthful breakfast on a daily basis consisting of a variety of foods, especially high-fiber and nutrient-rich whole grains, fruits, and dairy products