

SCHOOL-GYMNASIA #31

RESEARCH PAPER

on the topic:

"IS BREAKFAST IMPORTANT?"

Researched by:
Yaroslava Lebyd', a pupil of the 9-"B" form

Supervisor:
Dyka S.M., a teacher of the highest category, a senior teacher

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I. Introduction

The famous English saying implies 'Eat breakfast like a King, lunch like a princess and tea like a poor man'. Some of us fully follow it. They consider that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. The others don't agree with the importance of breakfast and try to skip eating breakfast in different reasons.

Is breakfast really the most important meal of the day? Or is it all just a myth? How to build a better and healthier breakfast? These questions are being discussed from far a long time and are actual till nowadays.

Thus, according to 47 observational studies on breakfast habits, carried out in Europe and the US during the latest years, about 10-30% of children and adolescents regularly skip breakfast. This detrimental practice progressively increases from childhood to adulthood.

The contemporary data from Ukraine indicate that this issue concerns Ukraine as well. Although 90% of the population declares that they usually have breakfast, only 30% eat a quantitatively and qualitatively appropriate meal at the beginning of the day. Every morning, most of people just drink a cup of coffee or tea. There is an increasing trend towards standing up and hurried breakfast, eaten at home, with little attention paid to the meal composition.

A subsequent analysis, made by Eurisko in 2007, confirms these data and characterized habits, lack of time, and lack of appetite as the main courses for passing over breakfast.

In this paper I try to answer the abovementioned questions and to investigate the attitude toward this issue of my classmates and schoolmates, to analyze how it is connected with their study and state of their health and to study recommendations of specialists on building a better breakfast.

So, the main aim of my paper is to prepare consensus information on the importance of breakfast, based on recent scientific evidence and on my own investigation among my classmates and friends, and in such a way show the role of breakfast in the attainment and maintenance of health and wellness.

II. Breakfast and Its Importance

2.1. What Is Breakfast?



First of all, let us define what breakfast is. The word breakfast is really two words, 'break' and 'fast'. 'Fast' is when you don't eat food, and all during the night you have been sleeping and not eating. Breakfast is the first meal taken after rising from a night's sleep, most often eaten in the early morning before undertaking the day's work.

Breakfast is regarded by many nutritionists as the most important meal of the day. It varies according to the culture of the country. For example, in Britain and the USA breakfasts often include complex carbohydrates which contain fibre, proteins, minerals, and vitamins, and provide a steady stream of glucose. Equally nutritious breakfasts are provided by salads and soups in Japan, or fish and bread in Norway. Ukrainian breakfast does not have special breakfast items like in the US. A typical breakfast for a person in the Ukraine would vary from city to city. People in villages usually eat a soup (similar to kulish). In cities we have hot oatmeal with cream and a little brown sugar or with milk. Generally, Ukrainians have hot tea, and possibly boiled buckwheat, oatmeal, fried potatoes, bread and butter, or fried eggs for breakfast.

In general breakfast foods often include a carbohydrate such as grains or cereals, fruit and/or vegetable, a protein food such as eggs, meat or fish, and a beverage such as tea, coffee or fruit juice. Coffee, tea, juice, breakfast cereals, pancakes, sausages, bacon, sweet breads, fresh fruit, vegetables, eggs, mushrooms, black pudding, baked beans, muffins, crumpets and toast with butter or margarine and/or jam or marmalade are common examples of breakfast foods, though a large range of preparations and ingredients are associated with breakfast globally.

So, breakfast is when you break your fast by eating.

2.2. Why Is Breakfast Important?

My next step was researching what do nutritionists, physiologists and doctors think about this issue.

From early childhood we all hear from our mothers and pediatricians that breakfast is the main meal of the day. But they rarely explain us why it is so important.

So, why do we need to have our breakfast?

Web MD reported an interesting study that was done by the American Dietetic Association. The studies show that kids who eat a healthy breakfast have more concentration, eye-hand coordination and even better problem solving skills. Children who eat a healthy breakfast do better in all aspects of their school life from the classroom, to the playground.

Here are some reasons why taking the time to eat a morning meal will benefit us in the long run that are discovered by nutritionists and physiologists

- **Hunger control**
- **Mega-metabolism**
- **Feed your brain**
- **Long term benefits**

2.3. Importance of Breakfast for Pupils and Students

The exact meaning and importance of breakfast lies in the word itself. By eating breakfast, we are actually breaking the fast or long gap after dinner, the previous night. By the time we wake up in the morning, all our energy is used up and hence we need new energy to go through our daily routine. Students who do not eat or skip breakfast on a regular basis are at a high risk of developing gastroenteritis and several other health problems. Not only that, students have to face a lot of challenges in school and an empty stomach may come in the way of their progress. It has been observed that children who do not have their breakfast before going to school have problems, like, headache, sleepiness, stomach pain, muscle fatigue, etc. Indecisiveness, anger, anxiety, irritability, unhappiness, nervousness, lethargy, hostility, etc. are some other problems that can be seen in students who skip their breakfast. Such physical and psychological problems have the ability to hinder the learning process of students.

The first point that comes to my mind while thinking about importance of breakfast for kids is that breakfast helps in their overall learning process. Students have a busy time in school where they not only learn different subjects but also indulge in extracurricular activities. For doing these activities, they need energy which comes from glucose that breakfast provides. Moreover, eating breakfast regularly also helps in weight management which can reduce the risk of child obesity which has become a common problem in recent times due to unhealthy eating habits.

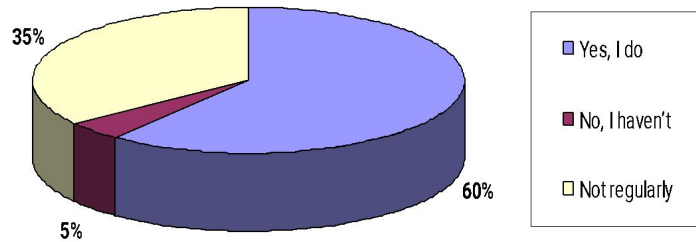
Students who have the habit of eating breakfast have been reported to have better concentration during lessons than those who do not. Breakfast is also beneficial for the memory of the students as they are able to remember and retrieve already learned information quickly as well as accurately. Even their problem solving ability is enhanced by eating breakfast on a regular basis.

Studies have shown that there is a direct correlation between eating breakfast and test scores. It is seen that students who have their breakfast regularly score better in their tests than those who avoid eating breakfast. As a healthy breakfast offers $\frac{1}{4}$ of the nutrition that the body requires, there are less chances that children will indulge in binge eating foods, like, fast foods which are not good for their health. Rather, they are likely to choose foods that are healthier as well as nutritious, later in the day.

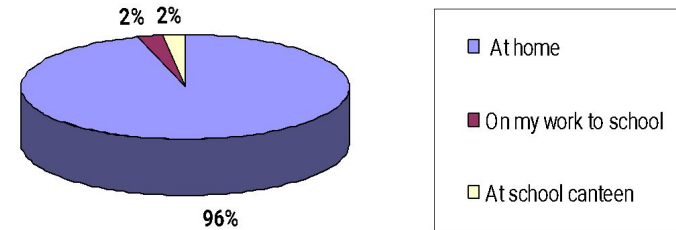
2.4. Attitude to Breakfast of My Classmates and Schoolmates

In the following part of my Research Paper I decided to investigate the attitude toward eating breakfast of my classmates and schoolmates. I have received following results:

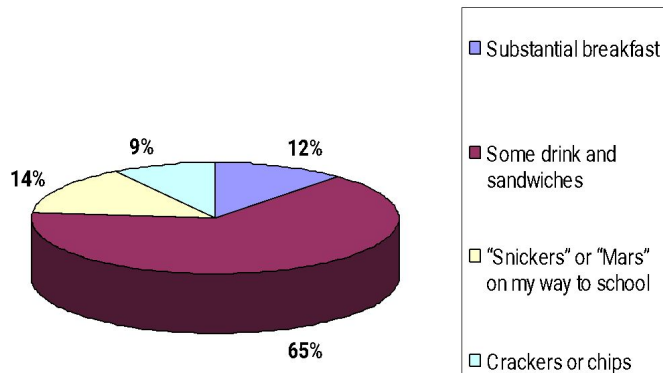
Do you eat breakfast everyday?



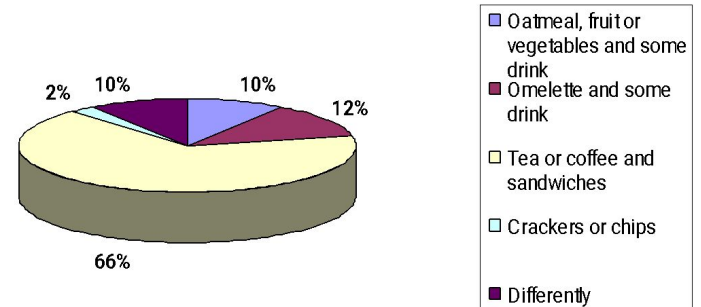
Where do you usually have your breakfast?



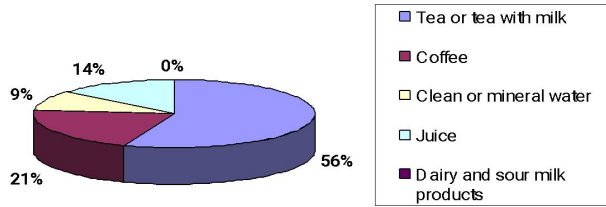
What kind of breakfast do you usually have?



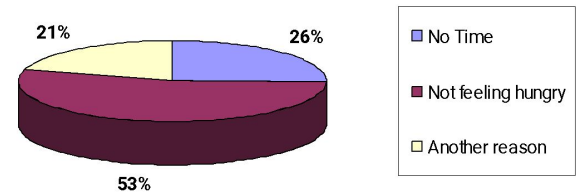
What do you usually have for breakfast?



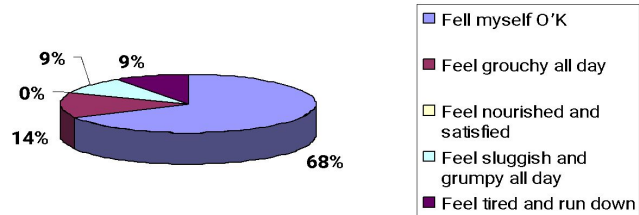
What do you usually drink during your breakfast?



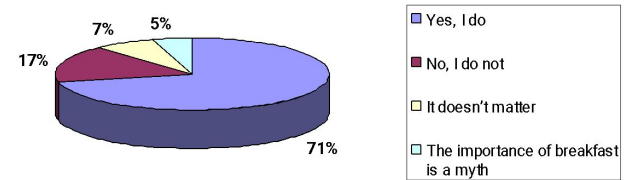
Why don't you eat breakfast regularly?



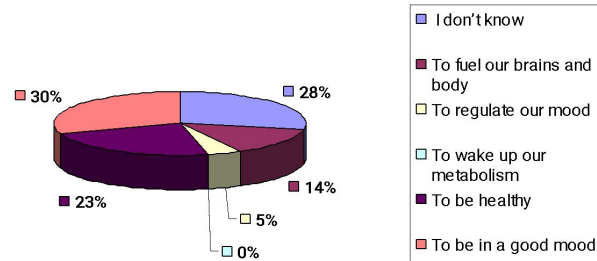
How do you feel yourself when you miss the breakfast?



Do you consider it is important to have breakfast regularly?



Why do you think it is important to have a healthy breakfast?



2.5. How to Build a Better Breakfast

Skipping breakfast may seem like an easy way to cut calories, but it can actually make losing weight and keeping it off more difficult. Here are three reasons to eat it, how to build it better and some great example meals that will help you improve the most important meal of the day.

Thus, three main reasons for eating breakfast:

Breakfast boosts your metabolism. By starting your day with a balance of carbohydrates and lean protein, you can actually boost calorie burning by speeding up your metabolism. Yes—we are telling you to eat to lose weight! Breakfast prevents crescendo eating. What begins with skipping breakfast often builds to an evening finale of excess portions and high calorie food. Spreading calories throughout the day can help you stay lean by providing steady fuel for your metabolism.

Breakfast stabilizes blood sugar. A breakfast of lean protein and fiber helps your body process carbohydrates better throughout the day. Keeping your blood sugar stable helps prevent hunger pangs and improve energy levels.

Breakfast is especially important for children and adolescents. According to the American Dietetic Association, children who eat breakfast are more likely to have better concentration, problem-solving skills and eye-hand coordination. They may also be more alert and creative, and less likely to miss days of school.

From the all abovementioned, we can understand that the science is behind a healthy breakfast. To eat a good breakfast is thus a step toward long-term health and well-being.



III. Conclusion

As it has been already investigated in this paper our meal influences much on our health and our mood. That's why I consider breakfast to be the most important meal of the day as it is the first our meal and it can put us in good spirits.

The first and most important reason you should have breakfast is because your body really needs it. Your body needs fuel to re-energize and prepare for the long (and usually tiring) day ahead. Our brains are particularly hard-done by our skipping our breakfasts. The brain needs glucose, its main fuel, and that comes from food.

So, no breakfast = lack of concentration, lethargy, tiredness, etc. To my mind, this is a good reason why you need to recharge your body with the most important fuel of the day to give you a headstart and keep you going.

As my research shows, for schoolchildren especially, having a good breakfast is important. The schoolchildren who eat their breakfast regularly have been shown to perform better at school, have been seen to be more active and have been seen to have less absenteeism from school.

Breakfast foods also contribute to a higher intake of essential nutrients/vitamins that our body needs. Some of them are vitamin C, thiamin, iron, calcium, etc.

So, we all need food. But at the same time we must keep to a balanced diet. It consists of all the things we need to be healthy and to have enough energy during the day. We must eat well, but not too much of the same food.

There are four main food groups to build our daily menu of:

- 1) milk and dairy foods (including cheese, yoghurt);
- 2) meat and fish (including eggs and chicken);
- 3) vegetables and fruit (including green vegetables, root vegetables, fruit juice);
- 4) potatoes and cereals (including bread, pasta, rice).

Each group is a good source of nutrients. A nutrient is a chemical or food that provides the things we need to live and grow. A lot of meals are a combination of two or more of the main food groups.

We also eat other things: fat, oil, salt and sugar, for example. And of course, everyone eat snack foods (crisps, chips, sweets, etc.). It's better to eat only a little of such kind of food or avoid it at all.

IV. SOURCES

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Thank you for attention!

