

# Yummy Breakfasts

## Fruity Oatmeal

Good news, moms! Instant oatmeal counts as a whole grain and has all the health benefits of steel-cut and old-fashioned varieties -- it's high in cancer-fighting antioxidants and also lowers the risk of heart disease. Make this in a jiffy: mix 1/4 cup one-minute oats or one packet instant oatmeal with bananas, raisins, or coconut flakes. Let your preschooler choose the fruits so she feels like she has control over her breakfast. "I make this five times a week for my kids," says Kelly Eldridge, a mom in Ashburn, Virginia.

## Protein-Rich Burritos

Lots of fiber combined with lots of protein is filling and can provide energy for up to four hours. "When my son started preschool, he was hungry before lunch, so I pumped up the protein," says San Francisco mom Patty Royall. "I make him a burrito with a whole wheat tortilla rich in fiber (at least 5 grams), organic cheese, and a soy sausage link."

## Yogurt Dippers

"Kids who love carrots and dip might like to dip apples or strawberries into yogurt," says Rose Dunnington, author of *Big Snacks, Little Meals*. Cut fruit into small chunks and have your child dip them into 1/4 cup plain yogurt. Serve with a side of protein, like a small handful of nuts or a couple of slices of turkey bacon.

## Ants on a Log

Spread almond or cashew butter on a banana sliced in half lengthwise, and top with raisins or dried cranberries. Serve with a 4-ounce yogurt.

## Rainbow Pancakes

"Since both my kids go wild for pancakes, I've started blending fruits and vegetables into the batter to make different colors," says Ondine Gibbs, a Berkeley, California, mom. Try carrots, mangoes, blackberries, or raspberries. Follow pancake instructions, subbing pureed fruit or veggies for water and milk. (Mix 1 tablespoon water with batter until you reach the desired consistency.) If using carrots, peel and slice about 2/3 cup, then steam or boil for about 20 minutes. Serve with a turkey sausage patty.

## Jazzed-Up Pizza

There are endless spin-offs of traditional pizza. Spread 2 tablespoons fruit jam or nut butter on a small whole wheat pita (leaving a "crust" at the edges), and top with sliced bananas or strawberries. Or use a base of half a whole-grain English muffin, and add cream cheese and almond slices. Another idea: top a pancake with scrambled eggs and slices of chicken sausage.

## Framed Eggs

"My husband uses cookie cutters to cut shapes in bread and then fills the holes with egg," says New York City mom Kim Donaldson. "He calls it hen in the woods. On different days it's a dog in the woods, a gingerbread man, or a dinosaur. My son loves it." This takes only a few minutes to make. Cut a shape from a slice of toasted wheat bread. Coat a nonstick ovenproof pan with oil spray and bring to medium-high heat. Place the toast in the skillet, fill the hole with a beaten egg, and reduce the heat to low. Place the skillet under the broiler for about three minutes, until the egg is completely set.

## 4 Ways to Make Breakfast Fun

\* **Hold It** Kids love foods they can grip, such as cut fruits and nuts. If you're serving up something bigger, like toast or a pancake, cut it into strips.

\* **Guess It** "My son loves closing his eyes and guessing what kind of fruit I put in his mouth or what flavor the yogurt is," Kim Donaldson says.

\* **Color It** Vividly colored fruits and vegetables add nutrition in a snap and are attractive to young kids. In addition to the usual berries, try mangoes, papaya, or kiwi -- the choices are endless.

\* **Move It** On a busy morning, put a smoothie or a drinkable yogurt in a sippy cup and take it with you.

## Better Cereals

These kid-friendly picks are good sources of fiber and protein and are low in sugar. "Sugar shouldn't be the first ingredient," says USDA health expert Marilyn Swanson, PhD, RD. "It comes in several forms, including corn syrup, brown rice syrup, and honey."

\* Kashi Mighty Bites Honey Crunch

\* Nature's Path EnviroKidz Organic Peanut Butter Panda Puffs

-- Amy Gorin

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