



## Start Your Day the Right Way



### **Key Concepts:**

- Eating breakfast should become a lifelong habit.
- Children who eat breakfast perform better in school.
- Choosing nutritious, low-fat and low-sugar foods and beverages for breakfast will provide a healthy meal.
- Iron is a mineral that is needed for good health. Foods high in iron are good breakfast choices.

### **Materials/Equipment Needed:**

- Cereal fortified with iron
- Large plastic bowl
- Thin paper plates
- ¼ cup measuring cups
- Plastic sandwich bags
- Magnets
- Magnifying lenses
- Rubber or wooden mallets
- Trash can
- Breakfast Poster Exhibits (Think Outside the Cereal Box and Eat Breakfast)
- Educational Fact Sheets (Breakfast: Always a Smart Start! and Breakfast Helps You to Be a Better Student)
- 2 tables with table cloths (one table for the exhibits and one for the activity)

### **Advanced Preparation:**

- Review activity instructions.
- Check number of fact sheets to make sure you have enough and make copies if needed.
- Have all needed materials available at the station.
- Set up accompanying poster exhibits.
- Pour cereal into large plastic bowl.

### **Talking Points:**

- Did you know that kids who eat breakfast do better in school? Breakfast feeds both your body and your mind. The brain needs energy from food so it can function at its best. A healthy breakfast provides the power to play at recess, boost brain power at math time and keep you going until lunchtime. Skipping breakfast decreases your attention span and the ability to concentrate.
- Breakfast is the most important meal of the day for both kids and adults. It helps all of us start our day in the right way. For a healthy breakfast, try to include foods from at least three of the five food groups: grains, vegetables, fruits, milk or meat and beans. In addition, try to make healthy breakfast selections that are low in fat and sugar. A healthy breakfast should be high in fiber, carbohydrates, vitamin C and calcium.
- Breakfast supplies our bodies with very important nutrients. One of those nutrients is iron which carries oxygen to all the cells of our bodies and plays a major role in energy metabolism. Iron has many important jobs in our bodies like preventing anemia. Anemia causes us to feel tired and irritable. It is important for us to eat iron rich foods like lean meat, fish, poultry, beans, peas, nuts, peanut butter, whole grains and iron-enriched grain products such as bread and cereal. Many breakfast foods like cereal are often a good source of iron for our bodies.

**Activity:** Did you know that actual iron filings can be found in cereal that has been fortified with iron? We are going to do an activity to see if we can find the iron in a fortified cereal that you might eat as part of a healthy breakfast. I have a bowl of cereal here for us to test. You will need to measure  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of the cereal and pour it into a sandwich bag. Seal your bag and then use one of the rubber mallets to crush the cereal into small pieces, but be careful so that your bag doesn't burst. Once your cereal has been crushed, open your bag and pour the crushed cereal out onto a paper plate. Once you have the cereal pour out onto the plate take your finger and move it around so that you have some white space. This will help you be able to see the iron when it moves on your plate. You can use a magnifying lens to investigate the cereal and see if you can spot any iron filings in the cereal. Next you can use a magnet to see if you can find any of the filings in the cereal. You can pull the magnet through the crushed cereal to see if any filings will stick to the magnet or you can run your magnet underneath the paper plate to see if you can cause any of the filings to move around on the plate. After you have finished investigating your cereal, please clean up by throwing your trash away.

**Summary:** What did you find out about the cereal? Guess what stuck to your magnet – iron filings. Yes, this is the same iron that is used to make nails and all sorts of other things we use every day! Iron is great for making things, but it is also a mineral needed for good health. Most of the iron in the human body is in the red blood cell's hemoglobin. In fact, iron is what makes blood red! Hemoglobin carries oxygen from the lungs to every cell in the body. Without iron, hemoglobin cannot do its job. On hemoglobin's trip back to the lungs, iron carries carbon dioxide which leaves the body when we breathe out. Iron is also a part of vital enzymes and proteins and plays a major role in providing energy for our bodies. Breakfast is a great time to enjoy iron rich foods since mornings should always begin with a healthy breakfast. Try to get up early enough to eat a good breakfast each morning and remind mom and dad that they should take the time to wake up their brains with breakfast each day too. If you don't have time to sit down and eat in the morning, pack a breakfast to

eat on the way to school or plan to eat breakfast in the school cafeteria. Some healthy breakfast choices include low-fat milk or yogurt, fruit, granola bars, bagels, low-sugar cereals, and orange juice. Whatever you do, don't be a breakfast skipper.

<b>References</b>	Smart Choices Youth Lessons from the LSU AgCenter
	Team Nutrition Family Nutrition Nights: Looking at Health Through Science and Math
	How to Teach Nutrition to Kids Leader/Activity Guide by Connie Liakos Evers, MS, RD
	Show Me Nutrition – Choosing Foods for Me 4 <sup>th</sup> Grade Curriculum from the University of Missouri Extension

<b>Background Resources</b> (Sources of Additional Information for the Presenter if Needed)	American Dietetic Association's Complete Food and Nutrition Guide
	LSU AgCenter – <a href="http://www.lsuagcenter.com">www.lsuagcenter.com</a>
	Smart Choices Youth Fact Sheet Breakfast: Always a Smart Start! (LSU AgCenter Publication #3026)
	Smart Choices Youth Fact Sheet Breakfast Helps You to be a Better Student (LSU AgCenter Publication #2710)
	Smart Choices Fact Sheet Wake to a Healthy Start (LSU AgCenter Publication #2709)

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