

# health&family

**NOT TERRIBLE** Other fast-food breakfasts make McDonald's popular Egg McMuffin look like health food, with 300 calories and 5 grams of saturated fat.



buying guide

## Better breakfasts

Yummy fast-food picks that won't kill your diet

Breakfast is getting faster. Many fast-food joints, including Subway and Burger King, sell eggs and other morning goodies—but not all of them are so good for you. Turn the page to see our list of some of the best and worst choices at seven popular restaurants based on calories, fat, and sodium.

Going for a greasy burger for lunch isn't great, but making a bad choice for breakfast is, well, really bad. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day: It can help you control your cholesterol and blood-sugar levels, maintain a healthy weight, and maybe even live longer. Regularly eating

breakfast was among the key behaviors linked to longevity in a large study of older Americans. Breakfast eaters also have lower rates of type 2 diabetes and are less likely to develop heart failure than those who don't, research suggests.

Breakfast also boosts energy, makes you more alert, improves memory, and helps you solve problems—in other words, it gets you through the day. And eating a nutritious breakfast with vitamin-packed eggs and fruits jump-starts a day of eating right. Skipping breakfast increases the chance that you'll reach for junk later, when you're too busy or too hungry to make good choices.

## Au Bon Pain



**PICK IT** APPLE CINNAMON OATMEAL (large)

**CALORIES** 370  
**Saturated fat** 1 g  
**Sodium** 15 mg  
**Sugars** 19 g  
**Protein** 11 g  
**Fiber** 9 g



**SKIP IT** SAUSAGE, EGG, AND CHEDDAR ON ASIAGO BAGEL

**CALORIES** 810  
**Saturated fat** 20 g  
**Sodium** 1,340 mg  
**Sugars** 6 g  
**Protein** 41 g **Fiber** 2 g  
 (370 calories and 700 mg of sodium are from the bagel)

## Burger King



**PICK IT** EGG & CHEESE CROISSAN'WICH

**CALORIES** 300  
**Saturated fat** 7 g  
**Sodium** 690 mg  
**Sugars** 5 g  
**Protein** 11 g  
**Fiber** 0 g



**SKIP IT** DOUBLE CROISSAN'WICH WITH SAUSAGE, EGG & CHEESE

**CALORIES** 680  
**Saturated fat** 18 g  
**Sodium** 1,520 mg  
**Sugars** 5 g  
**Protein** 29 g  
**Fiber** 0 g

## Denny's



**PICK IT** BUILD YOUR OWN GRAND SLAM

(with scrambled egg whites, English muffin, turkey bacon, and fresh fruit)

**CALORIES** 376  
**Saturated fat** 1.5 g  
**Sodium** 791 mg **Sugars** 18 g  
**Protein** 24 g **Fiber** 4 g

Beyond bad!



**SKIP IT** GRAND SLAMWICH

(two scrambled eggs, sausage, bacon, ham, mayonnaise, and American cheese on potato bread grilled with a maple spice spread)\*

**CALORIES** 1,320  
**Saturated fat** 42 g  
**Sodium** 3,070 mg **Sugars** 9 g  
**Protein** 52 g **Fiber** 3 g

## Dunkin' Donuts



**PICK IT** HAM, EGG & CHEESE WAKE-UP WRAP

**CALORIES** 200  
**Saturated fat** 4.5 g  
**Sodium** 640 mg  
**Sugars** 1 g  
**Protein** 10 g  
**Fiber** 1 g



**SKIP IT** SAUSAGE, EGG & CHEESE ON CROISSANT

**CALORIES** 640  
**Saturated fat** 17 g  
**Sodium** 1,250 mg  
**Sugars** 6 g  
**Protein** 22 g  
**Fiber** 2 g

**ROUND AND ROUNDER** Which Dunkin' Donut has the most calories? It's blueberry crumb, with 470. That's more than twice as many calories as you'll find in a glazed doughnut and twice the saturated fat. And watch out for those Munchkins! They're about 50 calories apiece—and who can eat just one?



\*Served with hash browns, which add 210 calories and 650 mg of sodium.

## McDonald's



**PICK IT** **FRUIT 'N YOGURT PARFAIT**

**CALORIES** 130  
**Saturated fat** 1 g  
**Sodium** 55 mg **Sugars** 19 g  
**Protein** 4 g **Fiber** 0g



**SKIP IT** **BIG BREAKFAST WITH HOTCAKES** (large biscuit)

**CALORIES** 1,150  
**Saturated fat** 20 g  
**Sodium** 2,260 mg **Sugars** 17 g  
**Protein** 36 g **Fiber** 7 g

## Starbucks



**PICK IT** **PERFECT OATMEAL**

**CALORIES** 140  
**Saturated fat** 0.5 g  
**Sodium** 105 mg **Sugars** 0 g  
**Protein** 5 g **Fiber** 4 g



**SKIP IT** **RASPBERRY SCONE**

**CALORIES** 500  
**Saturated fat** 15 g  
**Sodium** 650 mg **Sugars** 18 g  
**Protein** 8 g **Fiber** 2 g

## Subway



**PICK IT** **BLACK FOREST HAM, EGG WHITE & CHEESE MUFFIN MELT**

**CALORIES** 160  
**Saturated fat** 1.5 g  
**Sodium** 680 mg **Sugars** 1 g  
**Protein** 15 g **Fiber** 5 g



**SKIP IT** **FOOTLONG BLACK FOREST HAM & CHEESE BREAKFAST SANDWICH**

(regular egg)  
**CALORIES** 910  
**Saturated fat** 15 g  
**Sodium** 2,900 mg **Sugars** 9 g  
**Protein** 54 g **Fiber** 10 g



**EGG-ZACTLY RIGHT**

Cook eggs in heart-healthy canola oil.

## EYE-OPENERS

What to eat and what not to eat, whether you're home or away

### WHAT TO EAT

■ **PROTEIN** Aim for about 12 grams from lean sources, such as eggs or an egg substitute (a large egg or egg equivalent is about 6 grams), low-fat cottage cheese (14 grams per half cup), yogurt (13 grams per half cup), skim milk (about 8 grams per cup), and soy bacon or sausage (about 3 to 6 grams per ounce).

■ **CARBOHYDRATES** Choose complex carbs, such as whole-grain bread or cereal, fruit, and vegetables.

■ **HEART-HEALTHY FAT** Good sources include canola or olive oil, avocados, nuts, seeds, and fatty fish, such as salmon.

### WHAT NOT TO EAT

■ **BAD FATS** Keep saturated fat to a minimum by steering clear of full-fat meat and dairy products. Bacon is yummy but packs about a gram of saturated fat (and 42 calories) in a single strip. Also avoid trans fat, found in partially hydrogenated vegetable oils used in grab-and-go breakfast goodies such as prepackaged muffins.

■ **SUGAR** Women should get no more than 6.5 teaspoons (25 grams) of added sugar daily; men, no more than 9.5 teaspoons (38 grams). Some cereals have more than that in a single serving. A Dunkin' Donuts small Iced Mocha Spice Latte packs 32 grams!



## Best bites

Stock up on some of these nutritious and filling options and your morning meal will be a no-brainer. Shoot for 20 to 25 percent of your total daily calories with a mix of protein, complex carbs, and good fats to chase away morning stomach growls.

**FORTIFIED CEREAL** These easy meals can help you meet the daily recommended levels of important nutrients such as vitamins B12 and C and folic acid. Look for at least 3 grams of fiber and no more than 4 grams of sugar per serving. Tasty high-fiber options from our taste tests include Kirkland Signature Cinnamon Pecan (Costco), Kashi GoLean, and Post Shredded Wheat Spoon Size Wheat'N Bran. Top with nonfat yogurt instead of milk for a calcium boost.

**HOT CEREAL** Make oatmeal with low-fat milk instead of water and mix in raisins, dried cranberries, slivered almonds, or chopped walnuts. You can make slow-cook oatmeal ahead of time and freeze it in individual portions. Or try brown rice layered with yogurt and fruit, seasoned with cardamom, cinnamon, or cloves. Cook up some barley or quinoa and top with cinnamon, dried fruit, or nuts.



**GOOD GRUEL** Instead of oats, cook up rice with yogurt and fruit.



**PILE IT ON** Add ground flax seed to pancake mixes for a better breakfast.

**EGGS** Having eggs for breakfast helps dieters lose weight, research suggests—possibly because they're so filling that they reduce the chance of pigging out later. Even people with high LDL (bad) cholesterol can eat up to four eggs a week and then switch to egg whites or an egg substitute. If you have normal LDL cholesterol and limit your intake of saturated fat, you can safely eat up to seven eggs a week.

**YOGURT** Nonfat Greek yogurt is high in protein (about 22 grams per 8-ounce serving, compared with about 5 grams in the 6-ounce nonfat cup that many women reach for). Mix in fresh berries and a tablespoon or two of chopped nuts or flax seeds.

**PANCAKES** Yes, pancakes! Just skip calorie-packed butter, syrup, and whipped cream. Same goes for French toast and waffles. Instead, try some fresh fruit and/or low-fat ricotta cheese with cinnamon and vanilla extract stirred in. Boost your morning fiber content by making pancakes with whole-wheat flour or French toast with whole-grain bread. (Make it more healthful by adding nonfat dry milk,

whey protein, or ground flax seed to the egg mixture.)

**OPEN-FACED SANDWICH** Spread peanut butter on whole-wheat toast and top with fresh slices of apple or banana. Or put smoked salmon on a whole-wheat bagel with sliced tomato, onion, and low-fat cream cheese or soy cheese.

**SMOOTHIES** Blend bananas, berries, or other fruit with low-fat milk and/or yogurt and crushed ice. Or get creative: Try an unusual mixture such as avocado and papaya blended with water, whey powder, and a splash of skim milk. But be cautious with premade smoothies—they're often huge and loaded with calories. The large strawberry smoothie at Au Bon Pain is a belly-filling 24 fluid ounces and almost 500 calories.

**DIY FAST FOOD** Keep instant oatmeal packets (in our tests, Target's Market Pantry maple and brown sugar flavor was the favorite and the best value), low-fat cheese, or whole-grain cereal bars on hand for days when you're in a hurry.

**TIP** Rev up your brain and body by eating breakfast within an hour or two after waking up.