

# MEAL TIMING

*How Food Patterns Impact Metabolism, Hunger and Weight*



## **What you eat matters. When you eat matters, too.**

A growing body of research shows that disruptions to a person's natural circadian rhythm can lead to metabolic dysfunction and increased risk of diabetes, overweight and heart disease. The human body has adapted to the earth's 24 hour light-dark cycle, so much so that even people in total darkness continue in a 24-hour rhythm, as do cells from tissue biopsies in petri dishes.

The intricate time-keeping system regulates behaviors like eating, sleeping and wakefulness, as well as physiological functions like temperature, immune function, blood pressure, hormone production and digestion. Some research even suggests that overweight and obesity is a "chronobiological" condition. Studies also show that early eaters lost weight, despite consuming the same amount of food as the late eaters and reporting no differences in physical activity.

### **FOOD TIMING TIPS**

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**EAT BREAKFAST WITHIN TWO HOURS OF WAKING EACH DAY, NO EXCUSES.**

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**PRE-PLAN SNACKS FOR HEALTHY GRAB AND GO OPTIONS.**

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**IF YOU DRINK COFFEE, HAVE IT AFTER BREAKFAST.**

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**PRIORITIZE EATING EVERY 3 - 5 HOURS.**

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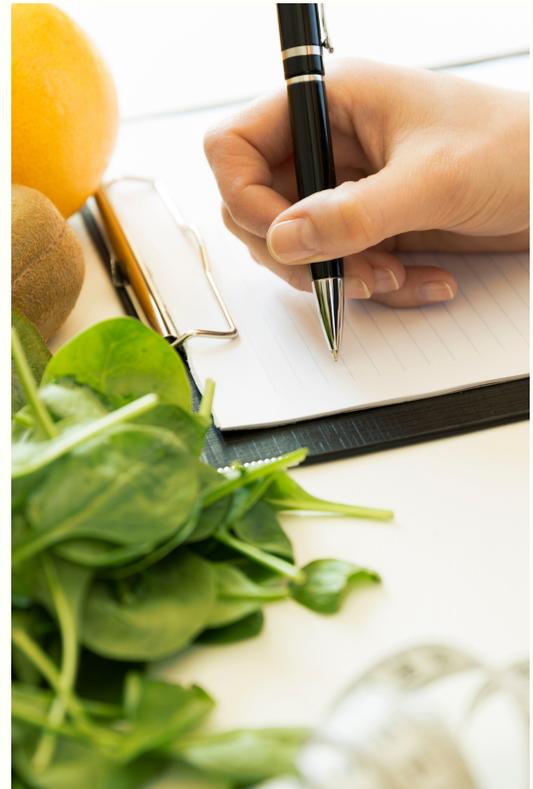
To tap into your natural timekeeping systems, it's important to regulate your habits. Aim to expose your body and eyes to bright light at dawn, and reduce light exposure, including blue light from technological devices, in the evening. This helps set our central clock. For our peripheral clock, breakfast is CRUCIAL, as it keeps the body and gut in rhythm.

When our central and peripheral clocks are synced, studies show the weight and blood sugar are better regulated, LDL cholesterol is lower, energy is more stable and sleep quality improves. Has there ever been a better reason for breakfast?

## Shifting meal timing can combat fatigue and cravings.

Do you struggle with afternoon or evening sugar cravings? Or, are you used to combating an afternoon energy slump? You may need to shift calorie intake away from the latter part of the day, focusing on nourishing yourself from the time you wake up. Some people claim they are "not a breakfast person" or "can't eat right away in the morning." Imagine if the root cause is backloading your day with calories, ultimately disorienting your hunger cues, blood sugar balance and natural rhythm.

As calorie intake shifts to the earlier part of the day, you may notice more steady energy levels through the afternoon, and a reduction in evening cravings. To make the shift, first prioritize breakfast, however small. Then, pre-plan meals and snacks so you're not letting stress or your schedule determine when, or what, you eat. It helps to get into a routine of steady food prep tasks, like cutting vegetables, pre-portioned trail-mix or hummus, and bulk cooking protein so healthy choices are the easy choice.



## BALANCED BREAKFAST IDEAS

**Hard boiled egg + Fruit + 1/4 c Walnuts**  
**3/4 c Plain Greek Yogurt + 1/2 c Berries + 1/4 c Pecans**  
**Whole Wheat Toast + 1/4 Avocado + 1 Egg**  
**3/4 c Oatmeal + 1/2 Banana + 2 T Chia Seed**

**Whole Grain Waffle + Almond Butter**  
**Smoothie with Greens, Peanut Butter, Fruit and Protein**  
**Whole Wheat Wrap + Hummus + Leftover Chicken + Vegetables**