

Gut Check

+ LOSE WEIGHT
+ BURN FAT

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BELLY BLASTER

BEST BREAKFASTS FOR WEIGHT LOSS

Start your day with the right kinds of fuel and your body will torch fat all day long

BY BRYNN MANNINO

Cliché alert: Breakfast is the most important meal of the day—as if you haven't heard that before. But what you may not know is that eating breakfast is essential for successful weight loss. "It's like putting logs on a wood-burning stove. **You need that initial input of fuel to get your metabolism going for the day**," says Milton Stokes, R.D., author of *Flat Belly Diet! For Men*. Shoot for 400 to 600 calories within an hour of waking up, with an emphasis on nutrients that will leave you satisfied for hours: protein, healthy fats, and fiber. Try these popular options, designed specifically to boost calorie burn.

▶ Shake made with whey protein, strawberries, and cinnamon

● "Whey is rich in branched chain amino acids, which stimulate muscle growth," says David Grotto, R.D., author of *101 Foods That Could Save Your Life*. **"The more muscle you have, the greater the fat-burning capacity of your metabolism."** Adding strawberries to your shake amps up fiber to help you feel fuller, while cinnamon may help your body burn carbs more slowly throughout the day so your blood sugar never spikes.

▶ Omelet with avocado, broccoli, and a few slices of hot pepper

● "Avocados are nature's ideal fruit for weight loss," says Jorge Cruise, author of *The Belly Fat Cure*. **"They replace sugar with appetite-curbing good fat."** Broccoli adds bulk to your meal. "To feel full, you want foods that add volume with minimal calories," says *MF* nutrition adviser Chris Mohr, Ph.D., R.D. Spinach is another good option. (If you like spicy, add hot peppers, which some studies say can help to speed up your metabolism.)

▶ Yogurt (plain, low-fat) topped with fresh fruit and a high-fiber cereal

● "The fat in yogurt contains conjugated linoleic acid, which can help you stay lean," says Dawn Jackson Blatner, R.D., author of *The Flexitarian Diet*. Plain is better than flavored yogurt since it has no added sugar. To make the stuff edible, toss in berries or melon. Top it with healthy cereal like Fiber One. **Study after study shows a direct link between fiber and weight loss**, Blatner says.