



TRIED
& *tested*

OUR EXPERT
PANEL TESTED
THE HEALTHIEST

Breakfast **CEREALS**

YOU JUST NEED TO TAKE A WALK THROUGH YOUR LOCAL SUPERMARKET OR HEALTH STORE TO SEE THE NUMBER OF BREAKFAST CEREALS ON THE MARKET. BUT HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT YOU ARE GIVING YOURSELF AND YOUR FAMILY THE BEST POSSIBLE OPTIONS? OUR NUTRITION PANEL HAS TAKEN THE GUESSWORK OUT OF IT FOR YOU

THE PANEL OF EXPERTS



Celynn Erasmus is a registered dietician who works as a full-time professional speaker and writer. She is passionate about equipping busy people with practical tools and techniques that will enhance their performance, help them to manage fatigue and boost energy levels. She is a regular media columnist, founder and developer of the *WELLCULATOR™*, and has published a bestselling book with Tafelberg entitled *Fast Food For Sustained Energy*, co-authored with renowned dietician Gabi Steenkamp. Erasmus is also co-founder of the *Resilient Energy Centre* and the *FAB Quotient™*. Along with behavioural strategist Joni Peddie, Erasmus has published book one of a series of three called *The FAB Quotient: Fight Fatigue and Stay Resilient*.



Linda Drummond holds a BSc in Chemical, Molecular and Cellular Sciences, and a BSc Medical (Honours) degree in Nutrition and Dietetics, both from the University of Cape Town. She also has a Programme & Project Management in Public Development Management certificate, which she obtained through the *University of the Witwatersrand Business School*. She is currently an associate at the *Nutritional Solutions* practice in Bryanston, and has a special interest in optimising the nutrition and health status of individuals of all ages with allergies, as well as translating individuals' nutrition-related genetic test results into practical lifestyle recommendations that will assist in enhancing their health and wellbeing. Drummond is also the nutrition consultant to the *Consumer Goods Council of South Africa Food Safety Initiative*, which focuses on compliance with food and nutrition-related regulations and industry-wide public health initiatives.



Monique Dos Santos is a registered dietician with a background in corporate wellness and a Masters degree in Dietetics in Sports Nutrition. Guided by evidence-based nutrition, Dos Santos believes in an integrated approach to wellness, where the key to being healthy is to adopt small, yet sustainable changes to your lifestyle. She is a member of the *ADSA (Association of Dietetics of South Africa)* Gauteng South branch, and is registered with the *HPCSA (Health Professionals Council of South Africa)*. She is also a *Discovery Wellness Network* dietician and *DNAlysis* accredited practitioner.

HOW TRIED AND TESTED WORKS:

This is our first Tried and Tested Panel. We have assembled a panel of experts to test a specific food group and advise what are the healthiest choices. This is no quick exercise, it takes hours to sift through and sample the food, check the labels and then research any additional information. We've kicked off this series with breakfast. It is important to note that we are not endorsing any product, nor suggesting cereal should be the choice over other meals. Our approach is to specifically help readers navigate their way through the plethora of promises made by manufacturers of food, and alarmingly a lot of hidden sugars and nasties are found in cereals that are passed off as healthy.

We also only focus on the brands that the panel recommend in this article. For more information on the panel test you can visit our website www.Longevitylive.com. 22 cereals (including popular brands, children's cereals, muesli and oats) were examined under the following criteria by the independent nutrition panel. No supermarket in-house brands were tested.

- Ingredients listed on the label in order.
- Does the cereal live up to its packaging?
- Is the product high in energy (> 950kj)?
- Is this product high in protein, a source of protein (5g/100g and 2,5g/418kj), or neither?
- Is this product low-GI?
- Is this product high in fibre (6g/100g), a source of fibre (3g/100g), or neither?
- How many vitamins and minerals does this product contain: >21, 11-21 or <10?
- Per 100g, how many vitamins and minerals are at 100% of NRV levels: > 21, 11-21 or <10?
- Are there any additional functional ingredients? If so, what?
- Is this product non-GMO?
- Is the product: gluten-free, lactose-free, wheat-free, egg-free or nut-free?
- What is the sodium content: <390mg/100g, <500 mg/100g or >500 mg/100g?
- Sugar content: The WHO recommends 10% of total energy could be from added sugar; on an average 8 400kj diet, this means 840kj/49g of sugar. 1 teaspoon = 4g. According to this calculation, what percentage of daily allowance is in one serving of the product: 10-20% (5-10g sugar per serving), 21-30% (10, 1-15g per serving) or >30% (> 15g per serving)?
- Is the total product composition within the prudent dietary guidelines per serving?
- What is the most popular way to mix this product: milk or water? How does this change the composition?
- Would the general consumer add sugar to the product? How would this change the composition?
- Are there any hidden nasties to take into consideration? If so, what?
- Overall taste and flavour.

The panel convened in an open forum. The results were tallied and discussed.

LONGEVITY'S CHOICE :



FUTURE LIFE HIGH PROTEIN SMART FOOD/FUTURE LIFE HIGH ENERGY SMART FOOD

Panel comments: "The packaging provides accurate portion serving suggestions, but also, as a **processed cereal**, it is better than many others on the market, as it is low-GI, provides fibre and has a GIT/colon focus with its Moducare product."



JUNGLE OATS ORIGINAL

Panel comments: "This was the most natural, **unprocessed cereal** of choice. Lowest in sugar. The fibre would make it satisfying and lower-GI."



KELLOGG'S ALL BRAN FLAKES

Panel comments: "Compared to many other **processed cereals** that either have added sugars or lack fibre, this cereal is lower in sugar (assuming consumers don't add sugar) and is low-GI."



NATURE'S SOURCE SWISS MUESLI

Panel comments: "The main ingredient is **oats**, with not just added **dried fruit**, but also **nuts**. This provides a better macronutrient profile (carbohydrate, fibre, protein, fat)."

**These top 4 cereals are listed alphabetically*

longevity
LIVE.COM

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THE RESULTS OF THIS PANEL, VISIT: LONGEVITYLIVE.COM



FAST FACT: THE PERCEPTION OF MUESLI AND GRANOLA IS THAT THEY SHOULD BE EATEN AS A CEREAL, WHEN IN ACTUAL FACT THEY SHOULD BE CONSUMED AS A TOPPING FOR FRUIT SALAD OR YOGHURT, AT AROUND 30G TO 70G PER SERVING, DEPENDING ON THE DENSITY OF THE PRODUCT. READ SERVING SIZES CAREFULLY WHEN PURCHASING AND EATING MUESLI.



TIP:

Oats are low-GI, keeping you feeling fuller for longer. Ideally, add protein (eg milk, yoghurt, a boiled egg on the side) or a healthy fat (a teaspoon of nut butter, a sprinkle of seeds) to balance this breakfast meal better. Always choose raw oats, and avoid instant and sweetened options.



FAST FACT:

While fruit juice is traditionally served with breakfast, this can be deceptive, comments Dos Santos. “Although fruit juice is healthy, with vitamins and good nutrients, it is very concentrated in energy/calories and lacks the fibre found in whole fruit. Thus, fruit juice doesn’t provide the same nutritional benefit as whole fruit. Rather have whole fruit with a glass of water, which will fill you better, or dilute your glass of fruit juice with the same amount of water.”

TURNING BREAKFAST ON ITS HEAD

“Just as the name implies... breaking a fast, it is the first meal of the day after a fast of sleeping and not eating,” explains Erasmus. “Just like tuning a guitar before playing melodiously, we can tune our bodies (and brains) before we perform for the day. If we start our day on a large sugar dose that is fast-releasing, then rather than finetuning our system, this causes fluctuations and havoc.”

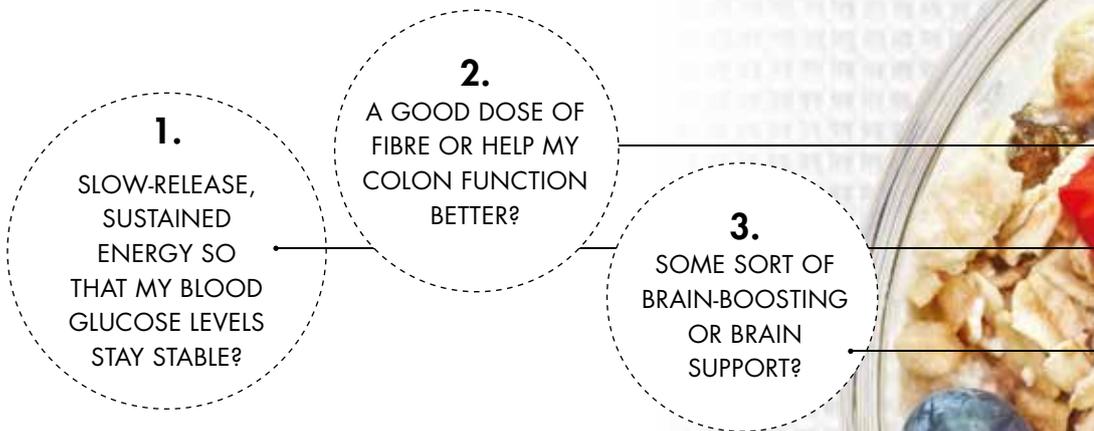
This can leave our blood glucose and hormones having to rebound and work harder to create harmony and equilibrium within our bodies, she says. “What we eat digests and absorbs to provide raw materials for hormones and neuromessengers. These hormones and neurochemicals determine our emotions – for example, dopamine makes us feel motivated. Our emotions drive our behaviour. And it is our behaviour over time that ultimately drives our success and maps out our lives.”

Drummond adds that breakfast helps to top up the energy stores you have used up each night while your body repairs and renews itself. It also gives you energy for your morning activities, whether at work, school, home or out and about. “While breakfast is often quoted as ‘the most important meal of the day’, this may not strictly be true. It’s more helpful to say that no meal should be categorised as more important than another, and daily food intake should be considered as a whole.” Skipping meals, whether it be breakfast, lunch or dinner, is not advised.

Dos Santos comments: “Breakfast is important to provide you with sustained energy throughout the busy work day, as well as to help prevent poor food choices later on in the day. Those who skip breakfast are more likely to overeat during the course of the day as the body tries to catch up key nutrients, vitamins and minerals missed at breakfast.”

ASK YOURSELF:

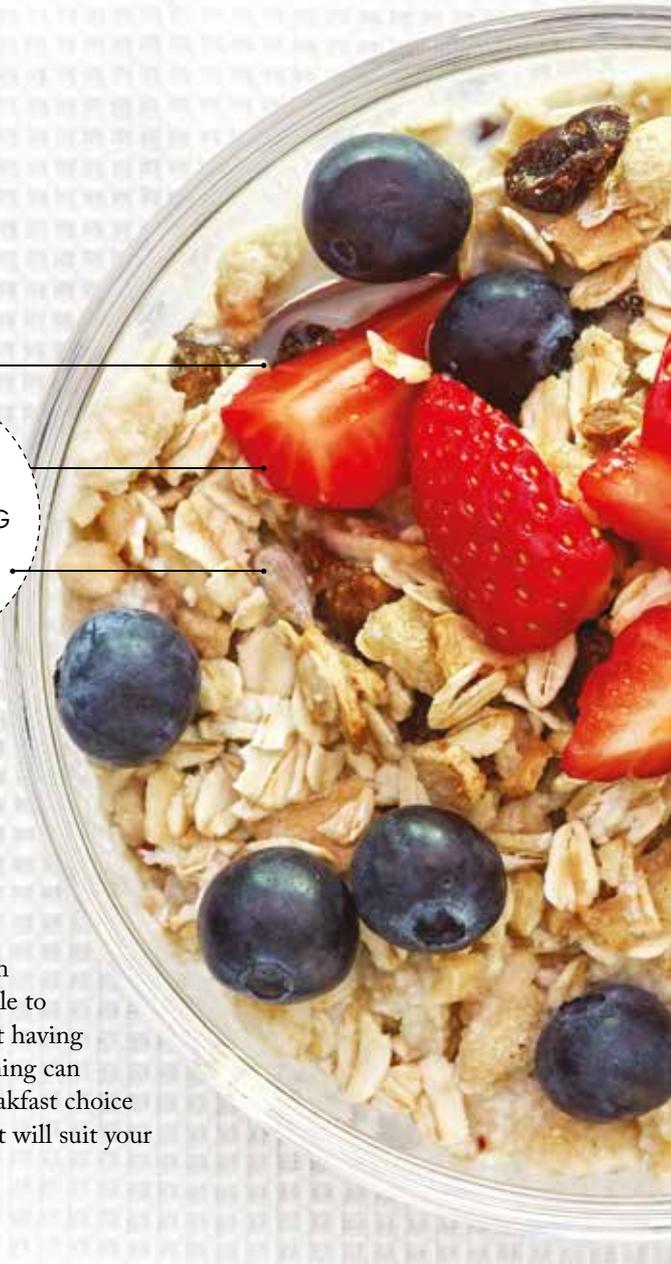
“DOES THIS BREAKFAST PROVIDE ...”



Erasmus says: “Just because a certain culture or upbringing says that eating cereals is best, it doesn’t necessarily mean this is the only option, or true, for that matter. Looking at other cultures, we can see that many do not consume cereals, yet are healthy.” She cites the Okinawans (famous for having the longest life expectancy in the world), who do not eat packaged cereals for breakfast; neither do the Icarian Greeks or many native African populations. “Makes us wonder if having a serving of leftover supper would not be a better option than most cereals.”

Drummond adds: “Establishing a regular eating pattern has been shown to improve

glycaemic control, reduce the likelihood of weight gain and curb hunger pangs. However, 19% of children in South Africa still regularly miss breakfast. There are many reasons for this, but if it is due to not being hungry in the morning, not being able to get up early enough or not having enough time, a little planning can result in you finding a breakfast choice and time for breakfast that will suit your lifestyle.”



WHAT IS A HEALTHY BREAKFAST?

Erasmus breaks it down:



Step 1:

Half-fill your plate or bowl with colour from nature’s colour palette in the form of fruit or vegetables, such as grilled tomatoes, mushrooms, roasted vegetables, and so on.



Step 2:

Choose one fistful of starch in the form of low-GI toast, a high-fibre cereal, baked beans, and so on.



Step 3:

Choose a portion (the size of the palm of your hand) of low-fat dairy or lean protein, such as low-fat yoghurt, cheese, egg, fish, and so on.



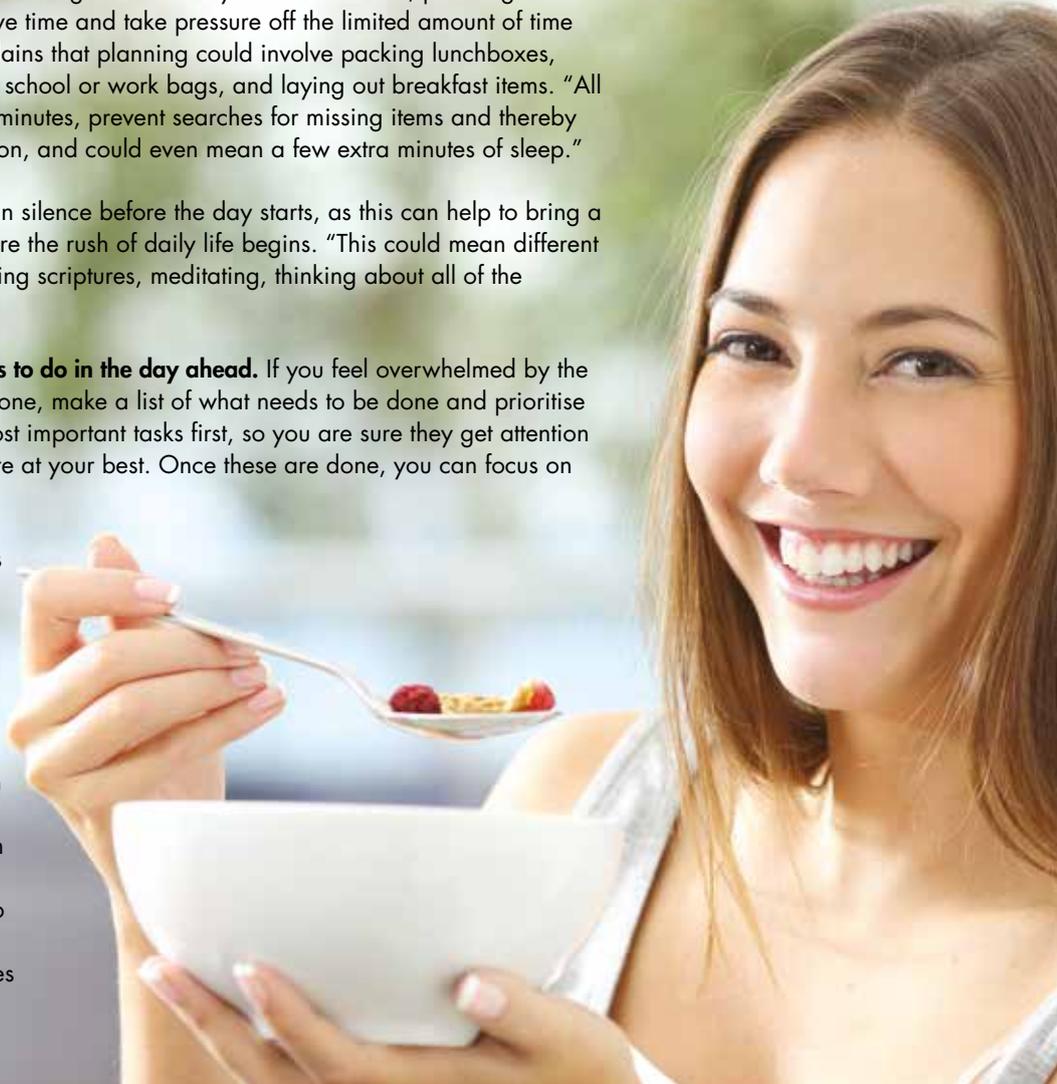
Step 4:

Have a small portion of healthy fat, such as nuts, seeds, peanut butter or avocado. Alternatively, a small amount of good-quality oil could be used to prepare the breakfast.

4 WAYS TO START YOUR DAY:

LINDA DRUMMOND OFFERS THE FOLLOWING TIPS:

- **Plan for the morning ahead the night before.** Mornings can be chaotic, especially when there are children who need help getting ready or if you have a large family that needs to share one or two bathrooms in the morning. "Whatever your circumstance, planning for the day ahead the night before can save time and take pressure off the limited amount of time you have in the morning." She explains that planning could involve packing lunchboxes, laying out clothes to wear, packing school or work bags, and laying out breakfast items. "All of these actions can save precious minutes, prevent searches for missing items and thereby reduce early-morning stress or friction, and could even mean a few extra minutes of sleep."
- **Have quiet time.** Spend some time in silence before the day starts, as this can help to bring a sense of calm and perspective before the rush of daily life begins. "This could mean different things for different people, eg reading scriptures, meditating, thinking about all of the positive aspects of your life."
- **Decide on the most important things to do in the day ahead.** If you feel overwhelmed by the number of things you need to get done, make a list of what needs to be done and prioritise the most important tasks. Do the most important tasks first, so you are sure they get attention and you address them when you are at your best. Once these are done, you can focus on the tasks that are not as important.
- **Get moving.** Exercise has numerous benefits for our health, and has a stress-lifting and mood-enhancing effect. Starting your day this way will give you these benefits, and makes it easier to include them in your daily routine. Trying to do exercise at the end of long day can be difficult, and it may be missed altogether. If you can't get to a gym to train, you could go for a jog or walk, do a few minutes of yoga, do a couple of sets of push-ups, use a skipping rope, or do a few exercises using a DVD in your lounge before your day starts.



CELYNN ERASMUS'S TOP 5 MORNING TIPS

- ① **Hydrate.** Drink water or herbal tea infusions.
- ② **Eat like an artist.** Make your bowl or plate a canvas of colour from nature. Always include fruit and/or veg.
- ③ **Eat mindfully.** How we eat is as important as what we eat. Eat slowly, with presence, and savouring the flavours and textures of each mouthful. Eating with a sense of gratitude is also important.
- ④ **Avoid sugar** or fast-releasing ingredients, such as high-GI carbohydrates.
- ⑤ **Feed your soul as well as your body.** Breakfast is a good time to set your daily intention(s). Set an intention to fuel well for the day and to focus on something that's important to you. ■

