



## 5 HEART HEALTHY BREAKFAST IDEAS READY IN 5 MINUTES OR LESS

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Mornings are rough- pandemic or not. Rushing to get to class on time, making yourself look presentable, finishing up that last minute assignment... who has time to make a healthy breakfast? We have all heard that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, but are you really fueling yourself optimally for the busy day ahead by grabbing that breakfast bar or sugary cereal first thing in the morning? Actually, it's not just the day ahead to consider when making that breakfast decision but really the decades to come because the diet and lifestyle choices of our early twenties impact our health long term.

Atherosclerosis is the process of the blood vessels in the heart and throughout the body hardening, which leads to heart attacks, peripheral artery disease, and strokes. While these consequences of atherosclerosis usually occur later in life, the process of atherosclerosis starts as early as our teens and 20s!

Luckily, lifestyle choices such as eating a balanced diet, exercising, and not smoking can all lower the risk of atherosclerosis and keep our heart healthy, and the sooner the better!<sup>1</sup> You will not only protect your heart long term, but you will notice the difference in how you feel short term too. Get ready for more energy, mental clarity, and better mood!

These 5 heart healthy breakfast ideas can be customized to your preferences, so you are guaranteed to find one you like. Plus, for added convenience, you can prepare most of them in batches ahead of time so that breakfast is one less thing you have to think about during those crazy mornings. Fuel your body and brain for the busy day ahead and your heart for years to come!



## 1. Chia Seed Pudding

Chia seeds offer a hefty dose of omega 3 fatty acids and fiber, both of which are essential components of a heart healthy diet. Use the recipe below to prepare a big batch to keep in your fridge for up to several days. This tasty recipe also works great as a snack or dessert!

### How to

1. Combine chia seeds with a low-fat milk of your choice in a 1:4 ratio (for example,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup chia seeds with 2 cups of milk). Stir and let sit for 3 minutes until gelatinous.
2. Blend with your favorite frozen berries until smooth. Try adding banana or avocado for a thick and creamy texture or throw in some cacao and cinnamon for a more earthy flavor profile.
3. Eat immediately or store in the fridge until you are ready, then top with fresh fruit, granola, nuts, dried coconut, or your other favorite toppings and enjoy with a spoon

**Pro tip:** Opt for unsweetened pea or soy milk for a low sugar, plant-based protein boost.



## 2. Yogurt Parfait

Yogurt provides a solid foundation that you can build on for a heart (and gut) healthy breakfast, snack, or dessert. In order to make a balanced meal and keep you feeling full, ensure you have a source of protein. Greek yogurt is made from cow's milk and contains the highest amount of protein, yogurt made from soy milk and pea milk (check out the brand Ripple) are protein-rich dairy alternatives. Coconut, almond, and cashew yogurts are also tasty, but are less protein-rich, so be sure to pack on the protein filled toppings.

### How to

1. Start with your yogurt of choice, then add your toppings.
2. Try adding low-sugar, whole grain granola or cereal, fresh or frozen fruit, chia or ground flax seeds, and nuts or nut butter.
3. If preparing ahead of time, combine all ingredients except for the granola or cereal (to keep it from getting soggy) and store in the fridge. Then add the final toppings when you are ready to eat.

**Pro tip:** When choosing a yogurt, look for 0 grams of added sugar on the label and flavor it yourself with healthier alternatives to processed sugar such as fruit or a drizzle of honey or pure maple syrup

### 3. Overnight Oats

Rollled oats are a whole grain that are high in soluble fiber which may reduce the risk of heart disease by lowering LDL (or “bad”) cholesterol. Taking 5 minutes to prepare a batch of overnight oats is a really convenient way to have breakfast ready to grab and go for the next several mornings. There are countless ways you can customize your oats and even make them with a carrot cake or pumpkin spice flair.

#### How to

1. In a large bowl, combine oats with your milk of choice in a 1:2 ratio (1 cup of oats with 2 cups of milk).
2. Then stir in chia seeds or ground flax seeds for an omega 3 boost. Add a pinch of salt and your favorite fruits, nuts, and spices. If you're looking a little added sweetness, try a drizzle or honey or pure maple syrup
3. Divide up servings into mason jars or tubber ware and let sit overnight. In the morning, eat cold or warm up on the stove or in the microwave.

**Pro tip:** Mix in shredded carrots or grated zucchini for a secret dose of veggie micronutrients and even more fiber.



### 4. Smoothie

Smoothies are a tasty way to pack a micronutrient punch into your morning to give you energy throughout the day and keep your heart happy. The key to building a satisfying and heart-healthy smoothie is variety and balance! Get creative with your recipe by incorporating 3 key ingredients:

- Fiber from whole fruits and vegetables
- Protein from nuts, yogurt, and/or milk (see tips above for choosing a high protein plant-based milk)
- Heart healthy fats from nut butters, avocado, and seeds

#### How to

1. In a blender, start with your base of cow's or plant-based milk or water. You can also add a couple scoops of yogurt or a splash of 100% juice.
2. Next, add your fresh or frozen fruit such as bananas, mixed berries, peaches, or passionfruit.
3. Then add a secret serving of veggies such as raw cauliflower, spinach, kale, or zucchini. Start with a small amount if you aren't sure if you're going to like it, but most people don't even taste it!



4. Finally, add your source of heart-healthy fats from nut butter, avocado, and/or seeds such as chia, flax, or hemp.

5. Blend until smooth, adding more of your liquid base as needed to achieve desired consistency.

**Pro tip:** Turn your smoothie into a bowl by adding your favorite toppings and eating with a spoon.



## 5. Fancy Toast

Yes, your toast can be both fancy and heart healthy! Whole grain bread is packed full of fiber, protein, and naturally occurring B vitamins and can be paired with a variety of toppings for a balanced and tasty meal. Try 1 of the 3 ideas below to find out which one is your favorite.

1. Choose a bread labeled “whole grain” or “whole wheat”.

2. When you are ready for breakfast, toast the bread and choose which of these fancy toasts you are going to make:

- Fancy avocado toast- Mash a ripe avocado onto the toast and top with a drizzle of olive oil, hemp seeds, arugula, a pinch of salt, pepper, and paprika.
- Fancy PB&J toast- To the warm toast, add a generous serving of natural peanut butter (or almond butter), jam without added sugar, and sliced banana.
- Fancy Mediterranean toast- Top with hummus, sliced cherry tomatoes, cucumber, a drizzle of olive oil, and pepper.

**Pro tip:** To make fresh jam at home, simply cover and heat frozen berries of your choice until soft, then mash with a fork or pulse in the blender until smooth. Add chia seeds to thicken and a splash of pure maple syrup or honey to sweeten. Chill or serve warm.

