Breakfast: The most important meal of the day

By Kay Blakley,
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We all know that breakfast is the most important meal of the day, right? And we used to think as long as you ate something for breakfast you'd be good to go. But, recent research says that what you eat matters as much as the fact that you do eat.

A nutritious breakfast is defined as one containing complex carbohydrates, fiber, protein and a small amount of fat.

In real food terms, think whole grain bread or cereal –the higher the fiber content the better; low-fat protein sources like boiled egg, peanut butter, low-fat or fat-free milk, yogurt or cheese; fresh fruit and vegetables or 100 percent juice without added sugar.

When kids have a breakfast built around these core areas they are able to concentrate better on the learning at hand. They're more alert and creative, have better problem-solving skills, improved hand-eye coordination, tend to be more physically active and miss fewer days of school.

Wow! Does that sound like an ad for a wonder drug to you? It does to me too! But, I believe it because I've seen the impact of a healthy breakfast on my own kids, and even experienced it with myself.

The meal doesn't have to be anything terribly involved –microwave scrambled eggs, whole grain toast and orange juice, sliced fresh fruit topped with yogurt and sprinkled with granola, peanut butter and banana slices on a whole grain English muffin and a glass of milk are all balanced breakfast menus.

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Be sure to keep lunch and dinner balanced, too.

If your meal contains a little something from each of the food groups detailed at the website myplate.gov, you'll see how smart food choices help to move your kids to the head of the class.

Depending on the commissary for all those smart food choices moves mom to the head of the class, too.

The following are some easy recipes, available at http://www.commissaries.com/kays_kitchen.cfm, to help you get started:

- Apple cartwheels
- Lunchbox bean dip
- Omelet in a mug
- Mom's egg mcmuffin
- Breakfast burritos
- Creamy wheat cereal with maple syrup and bananas
- Oatmeal Sconuts
- Whole Wheat Flax'n Apple Muffins

The Defense Commissary Agency operates a worldwide chain of commissaries providing groceries to military personnel, retirees and their families in a safe and secure shopping environment.

Authorized patrons purchase items at cost plus a five percent surcharge, which covers the costs of building new commissaries and modernizing existing ones.

Shoppers save an average of more than 30 percent on their purchases compared to commercial prices – savings amounting to thousands of dollars annually.

A core military family support element, and a valued part of military pay and benefits, commissaries contribute to family readiness, enhance the quality of life for America's military and their families, and help recruit and retain the best and brightest men and women to serve their country.

Helping service members prepare Family Care Plans: Resources

From militaryonesource.com

Editors note: This is part two of a three part series.

If you were suddenly deployed, who would provide care for your children -- or for an older relative who depends on you for care? Even if you were only away for a short time, on temporary duty or training, who would take over for you?

Nearly everyone in the military can benefit from a Family Care Plan that shows how your family is to be cared for in your absence, and in some cases you're required to create one. DoDI (Department of Defense Instruction) 1342.19 addresses when a Family Care Plan is required, and each service branch has a corresponding directive that explains that service branch's guidelines.

Your commander or supervisor can tell you the available resources to help you create a Family Care Plan that meets your service branch's specific requirements. These resources include your installation's Family Support Center and Legal Assistance Office.

The following resources can provide you with information on finding help and advice as you create your Family Care Plan:

• Supervisors – Your commander, supervisor, or a designated representative of your command is responsible for making sure that you have a current, workable Family Care Plan. This person can be your first resource for more information on the plan itself, what it should include, any particular requirements relating to your specific situation, and other people and services you can consult for help.

• Installation Family Support Centers – Next to your supervisor, your Navy Fleet and Family Support Center, Marine Corps Community Service, Air Force Family Support Center, or Army Community and Family Support Center) could be your most important resource in creating your Family Care Plan. These centers have counselors who are experienced in the creation of Family Care Plans and can help you understand the issues involved. In addition, these centers often have brochures or classes related to developing Family Care Plans.

National Guard Family Assistance Centers. If you aren't near an installation, National Guard Family Assistance Centers can also provide you with information on creating a Family Care Plan. They're available in every state. The Local Community Resource Finder on the National Guard Bureau's Web site at www.jointservicessupport.org will help you identify the closest center.

Legal Assistance Offices. Your installation's Legal Assistance Office can help you regarding any legal documents needed in your Family Care Plan. Professionals there can help you understand, for example, the general, limited, and medical power-of-attorney documents -- and can help you select the right ones for your particular needs. They can also help you create a will. In many instances, they will have all of the particular forms your service branch requires for a Family Care Plan. Go to legalassistance.law.af.mil/content/locator.php to find a Legal Assistance Office.

Military OneSource. Service members can get information from Military OneSource on preparing a Family Care Plan, and caregivers can learn about benefits and support available through the military and their local community. Be sure your caregiver knows that they are eligible to use this free 24-hour service. Consultants provide information and make referrals on a wide range of issues. Free face-to-face counseling sessions and equivalent phone, or online sessions are available at1-800-342-9647 or go to www.MilitaryOneSource.com.

Other helpful resources. Military libraries, installation social-service agencies, and religious advisers can also be helpful resources to consult when preparing your Family Care Plan. You might also want to speak with other service members who have Family Care Plans or have had them in the past. You can find detailed information on Family Care Plan requirements by going to www.dtic.mil and typing "DoD Instruction 1342.19 into the search box."

Next week, part three: Requirements