

How to Make the Perfect Breakfast

The full English breakfast is a tasty and filling start to the day. It is also a good way to fail your next medical exam. Take a leaf out of the Scottish recipe book instead and start your day with porridge. It's a much better meal than you might have thought. Here's why.



Saturday usually would buy watching old movies on the TV – with a bag of boiled sweets. I grew up on a staple diet of sugar.

Eat Healthy

When I was knee-high my grandfather would take me out on afternoons to watch our favourite soccer team play. They lost; some things don't change. On the way to the game he me a bag of sweets to suck on during the game. Drizzly Sunday's afternoons were spent watching old movies on the TV – with a bag of boiled sweets. I grew up on a staple diet of sugar.

When I reached shoulder height I started to transform from the skinny kid who disappeared when he turned sideways into a weight watcher – as in “watch me gain weight”. I continued to grow, but only at waist level. No surprise then when one day my doctor's office called: “the doctor would like to talk to you about your sugar”. The rest of my life as a type II diabetic had begun.

If you think porridge is just a winter breakfast think again

Now I have to be very careful about what I eat. Sugar is hidden in many processed foods so I eat mainly wholesome food prepared from scratch. Every morning starts with a bowl of porridge. If you think porridge is just a winter breakfast – the kind of breakfast that will send you out into the cold with a warm feeling inside - think again. Porridge (aka “porage” or “oatmeal”) is a very healthy food that can control blood sugar, cholesterol and help fight cancer.

What Is Porridge?

All varieties of true porridge come from the same source – oats. The name has been borrowed for other products made from wheat or peas but only because they resemble true porridge in appearance or texture. The Scots have traditionally embraced porridge more than the English. The



English considered oats good food for horses but thought people should eat wheat.

Oat grains comprise an inedible hull, or outer layer, with an inner kernel surrounded by bran. The bran is removed because it can cause the kernel to go rancid. The remainder of the kernel is called the “groat” and is the part that is processed for use in making porridge.

Groats are flattened by rollers to create “rolled oats” or crushed into “steel cut” oats. Groats can also be milled to create true “oatmeal”. Processed groats absorb liquids faster and therefore cook faster.

Which Type of Porridge is the Best?

If you have lots of time and patience you may want to sample "steel cut" porridge. Some varieties must be soaked overnight before cooking. Other varieties may be cooked directly. Pre-soaking is generally only required for the coarser varieties that do not absorb liquids very easily. On the principle that the most effort yields the greatest reward – all other things (such as the cooking process, grain quality and other ingredients) being equal – steel cut porridge should yield the best flavour.



Rollled oats are the most common variety and can usually be cooked straight away without pre-soaking. Porridge made from rolled oats can be a very satisfying and delicious meal and it doesn't take more than a few minutes to prepare.

How To Make the Ultimate Bowl of Porridge

I eat a bowl of porridge every weekday morning for my breakfast. I could say that I earned this penance by over-indulging in candy as a kid, but my breakfast has become a pleasure that jet powers me out of bed every morning. I love my porridge! I have developed my own

method of making it that produces a consistently good bowl of porridge every morning. Here is how I do it.

Ingredients

- 1 half a cup of rolled oats
- 1 half a cup of cold water
- 1 full cup of cold milk
- 2 tablespoons of sugar or artificial sweetener
- 1 pinch of table salt

Note: if you can find it, use sterilized milk for added creamy flavour, or substitute half the milk with coffee cream.

Preparation

Mix all the ingredients together in a small pan and cook over a medium high heat, stirring all the time, until the mixture begins to bubble. Turn off the heat, put a lid on the pan and leave the porridge for 5 to 10 minutes to thicken.

Two steps in this preparation are critical to success:

1. Stirring all the time while heat is applied to the pan – neglect this and ruin your breakfast!
2. Leave the porridge to thicken for 5-10 minutes – eat it too soon and be disappointed by its texture!

The resulting porridge will be smooth, creamy, completely free of lumps, absolutely delicious and will earn you high marks at your next meeting with your doctor.



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