Say No Weigh to Bad Breakfasts

This first meal is especially important for black girls.

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Many nutritionists agree that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. What that means is starting your mornings with nutritious eats is essential to your overall health. And with obesity rates rising among African Americans, it's especially vital for black teen girls to make breakfast a healthy one. Why? Good breakfast choices help girls avoid packing on excess pounds. At the same time, healthy eats can lower total cholesterol levels and LDL ("bad") cholesterol. (Too much LDL cholesterol can clog arteries and put folks at increased risk of heart disease.)

Studies show that overweight African Americans also have higher rates of strokes, diabetes and high blood pressure. "An excellent way [for black girls and other African Americans] to avoid these chronic diseases is to maintain or work toward a healthy weight," says Roxanne Davis-Cote, MPH, RD, a nutritionist at Beaufort Memorial Hospital in Beaufort, South Carolina. "A nutritious breakfast is an important part of that process." Best bets for breakfast? Whole grain cereals, low-fat yogurts and fresh fruits. They score an A+ in the fight against obesity.

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