

The Appeal of Oatmeal

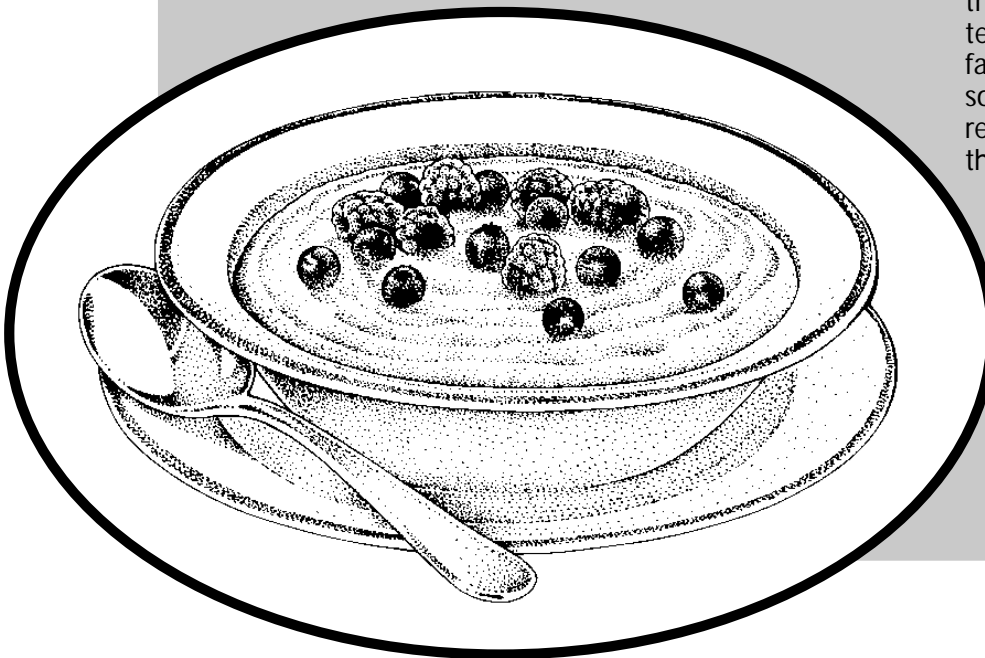
Oatmeal is one of the more appealing breakfast choices for children (and adults!). Oatmeal brings to mind healthful eating. What do we know about oatmeal?

Oatmeal comes from oat grains, a cereal grass. Surprisingly, there are several types of oatmeal: rolled oats, quick-

cooking oats, instant oats, oat flour, oat bran, and steel-cut oats are some of the known varieties.

Quick-cooking oats (rolled oats that have been cut into smaller pieces and rolled thinner, thus cook quickly) are an easy source for preparing many oatmeal-based

foods for children. Some nutritionists believe that steel-cut oats (whole grain oats; inner portion of the oat kernel, which are usually cut into two or three pieces using steel discs) are a better source of fiber, but take longer to cook. Oatmeal is associated with helping the lowering of cholesterol (along with other factors) because of its soluble fibers. Oatmeal research has shown that oatmeal (a complex carbohydrate) turns into sugar very slowly. It raises our blood sugar slowly by staying in the stomach longer, which decreases our hunger and craving created by other carbohydrates.



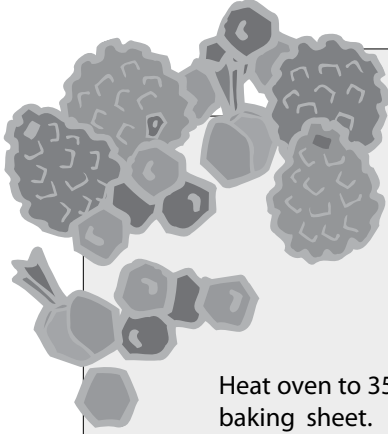
The good news:

Most children love oatmeal! And oatmeal can be a very versatile, healthy choice food! Oatmeal is usually a breakfast food, but an oatmeal pancake or bowl of oatmeal, yogurt, and apple with peanut butter would make a yummy lunch, too! Try the following recipes for snack, lunch, and breakfast!

Oh-So Delicious Oatmeal

1 cup water
½ cup rolled oats or quick oats
Dash of salt (optional)
¼ cup applesauce
Pinch of cinnamon
2 teaspoons brown sugar

Pour the water, oats, and salt into a medium pot. Heat mixture until it boils. After it boils, turn to low heat. Using a wooden spoon, stir in the applesauce and cinnamon. Cook on low heat and continue to stir the mixture for 5 minutes. Pout into a bowl and sprinkle brown sugar on top. Allow to cool before digging in.



Fruit & Honey Granola

3 ½ cups quick or rolled oats
⅓ cup coarsely chopped pecans or walnuts (optional)
½ cup honey
4 tablespoons (½ stick) margarine or butter, melted (or ½ cup canola oil)

1 teaspoon vanilla
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
⅛ to ¼ teaspoon salt (optional)
1 ⅓ cup dried fruit or fruit mix; dried cranberries, apricots, or mixed dried fruits

Heat oven to 350 F. In a large bowl, combine oats and pecans; mix well. Spread evenly in a 15 x 10 rimmed baking sheet. In small bowl, combine honey, margarine (or oil), vanilla, cinnamon, and salt. Mix and pour over oat mixture. Mix well. Bake 30 to 35 minutes, stirring every 10 minutes. Stir in dried fruit. Cool completely. Store tightly covered for up to a week. Serve as a cereal alone or with milk or yogurt.

Crock Pot Oatmeal

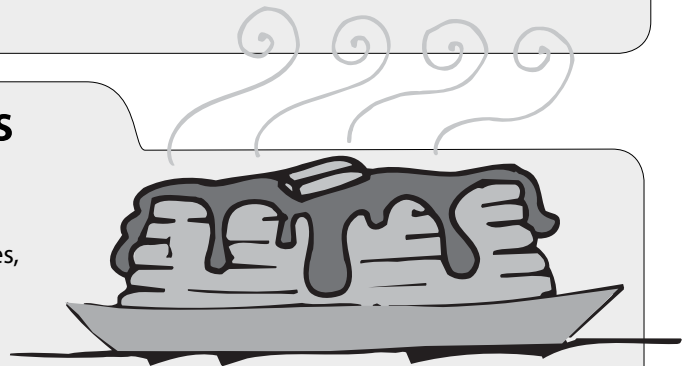
1 cup steel-cut oats
1 cup raisins, cranberries, or dried fruit of choice
4 cups water
½ cup milk, half and half, or buttermilk
2 tablespoons of cinnamon or pumpkin spice
2 tablespoons of maple syrup

In a crock pot, combine all ingredients. Cook on low heat (covered) for 7-9 hours. Stir and serve. *For non-dairy oatmeal, try adding applesauce, apple butter, or almond butter instead of dairy products.

Oatmeal Pancakes

1 cup rolled oats or quick oats
1 cup flour
2 tablespoons baking powder
2 tablespoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
2 eggs; lightly beaten

1 ½ cups milk
¼ cup vegetable oil
*Try adding fruit (blueberries, bananas, and dried fruit) or cinnamon for some zing!



Combine oats, flour, baking powder, sugar, and salt in a mixing bowl. Combine eggs, milk, and oil; pour into the dry ingredients and stir. Let batter sit 5-10 minutes. Pour batter by ¼ cupfuls onto a lightly greased hot griddle or pan; turn when bubbles form on top of pancakes. Cook until second side is golden.

PENNSYLVANIA STATE



College of Agricultural Sciences
Cooperative Extension

Dr. James E. Van Horn, CFLE, Better Kid Care Program Director

Developed by Christine Belinda, Penn State Better Kid Care Program

253 Easterly Parkway, State College, PA 16801 • Phone: 1-800-452-9108 • Website: betterkidcare.psu.edu

Supported by funds from the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, Office of Child Development.

This publication is available in alternative media on request.

Penn State is committed to affirmative action, equal opportunity, and the diversity of its work force.

Sources: Kidshealth.org, www.familyeducation.com