SPECIAL REPORT

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What should a professional cheerleader eat for breakfast? And it's NOT Cheerios®!

Flavia Berys & Grace Suh

Eating better can be a daunting goal, especially in our fast-paced hectic modern life where it is easier to grab a Happy Meal® through the McDonald's® drive-through than to fix a healthy meal.

Does the thought of changing your diet frighten you into a state of denial and avoidance? Do your eyes glaze over when looking at the thousands of diet book titles? Do you have analysis paralysis when figuring out which lifestyle diet will work for you?

Sometimes we end up doing nothing and keeping the status quo because it's just too difficult to find and commit to the perfect diet. But that avoidance behavior isn't helping anyone, so here's an idea to get you started on your road to better eating.

Before making any major life changes, why don't you start with changing just one meal? One meal out of three seems more doable, doesn't it? That's because it is.

We recommend starting with breakfast. Your mother may have told you breakfast is the day's most important meal. She was right!

Breakfast is generally the easiest meal of the day to automate, because you generally are home in the morning. Lunch and dinner can be tougher nuts to crack because you are on the go more often for those meals, or out with friends, but breakfast is usually in a more controlled setting.

If you always begin your day with a balanced breakfast that includes lean protein, fruits high in antioxidants, healthy fats and whole grains or non-starchy vegetables, then the rest of the day will be easier to conquer.

Who knows? You might find yourself making better choices effortlessly all day just because you started off right.

Starting the day right can give you lasting energy. Starting it wrong can lead to energy spikes, lethargy, mood swings, weight gain, weight loss resistance, and even depression. That's why it's the one meal to shift if you can only handle one major diet change at a time.

So what is the best choice for breakfast? A breakfast that keeps you full and focused all morning requires the right foods. Always begin with protein, which regulates your blood sugar and fires up your metabolism for the rest of the day.

You should avoid starches like cereal, because many people have undiagnosed gluten sensitivities and an undesirable insulin-spike response to the sugars that starch breaks down into. The dairy in cereal is also problematic for many who are lactose intolerant but don't know it. That's why cheerleaders shouldn't have Cheerios® for breakfast, no matter how "cheery" the name!

Eggs are a great choice for some women, but many people have undiagnosed egg allergies and the effect on your cholesterol due to an egg-heavy diet is under debate, so eating eggs for every breakfast is not the best choice for many. If you do choose to eat eggs as your protein source, try egg whites with sauteed frozen spinach for a fast meal.

But for those of you who rolled your eyes when you thought of how impossible it would be to pull out the frying pans every morning, we've got a solution for you that requires very little time or effort, so ditch those excuses!

Read on for the perfect solution:

Grace Suh is a nutritionist, licensed acupuncturist and expert in Chinese medicine and women's health issues. Grace is also a blogger for the Huffington Post and created a program to help you detox to get lean and sexy.

Visit www.HolisticWeightLossMethod.com to follow Grace and learn more about her work.

Flavia Berys is an expert in the world of pro cheerleading and is the author of *Professional Cheerleading Audition Secrets: How To Become a Cheerleader for NFL®, NBA®, and Other Pro Cheer Teams.*

Find the book on Amazon or visit the book's website at www.ArenaCheerleader.com for audition success tips.

Simply start every morning with a protein smoothie that includes the elements below.
You can visually see how much smoothie you are making by eyeballing how much you are putting in your blender.

Five simple key elements:

- **Protein**. A high-quality whey or pea/rice protein powder with less than 5 grams of sugar per serving and minimum of 23 grams of protein; be sure to read the label because many formulas contain higher sugar grams than that! Vegan blends are low-allergen and preferable over whey. A great one to try is either Vega® brand in chocolate or Thorne® VegaLite brand in vanilla [scroll to Patient Express Registration and put in this code: "hcp1025841" to access]. Both brands have other yummy flavors as well!

- **Fiber**. Berries, ground flaxseed, hemp seeds and chia seeds make ideal fiber sources.

- **Fruit**. Frozen berries or an apple (leaving the peel on for extra fiber) work great!

- **Greens**. A handful of leafy greens such as spinach or kale (yes, greens!). You can also use a powdered green source, such as Greens First.

- **Liquid**. A liquid such as unsweetened coconut milk, coconut water, or almond milk. While almond milk is good, using coconut milk is even better because coconut milk has Medium Chain Triglycerides (MCTs), which support the immune system. No need to add any ice, but feel free to add some purified water as additional liquid. If you added a fruit with higher sugar content, like an apple, choose coconut milk to add some extra fat, which will balance out the sugar.

Toss everything in, power it up, pour it into a travel mug, and GO! You'll stay full and focused throughout your morning.

The smoothie packs vitamins, anti-oxidants, and sustained energy into a liquid yummy goodness that you can easily take with you on your commute or morning walk.
It is so easy to make this switch. You will be shocked at how quickly you wake up craving your power protein smoothie! Nothing could be easier to do every morning.
Here are some tips, plus check out the sample recipes included in this Special Report.

- **Tip #1:** Don't put off a protein smoothie habit because you are saving up for a $500 Vitamix® blender first. It's the best in the industry, but any $30 or $60 blender from your local drugstore will work just fine.

- **Tip #2:** Keep your protein powder canister by the blender on your counter, ready to go.

- **Tip #3:** Also keep your chia and flax canisters next to the blender. Once your habits stick, move everything to the pantry, but for now, a cluttered countertop is better than a cluttered gut!

- **Tip #4:** Keep frozen berries and spinach in the freezer. Fresh fruits and veggies are of course better for you, and organic the best of all, but the bags of fruit and spinach in your freezer aisle are the easiest bet if you don't shop often enough to stay stocked with fresh produce.

- **Tip #5:** Use the sample recipes below and the recipe guide above to create your own smoothie recipes. If you get bored of the same recipes, add some fresh avocado, almond butter, or unusual low-sugar fruits to mix it up and add variety to your smoothies.

But some of you might be thinking, "That sounds great and all except one thing—I can't give up my coffee! My triple mocha latte is what gets me

through my day!"

You might be surprised at how well you will do without caffeine when you start your day with a protein smoothie. It's truly best for you to wean yourself off of jitter-inducing stimulants like caffeine.

However, that can be tough, so if you are going to indulge in caffeine, then at least switch to better caffeine habits.

If you need that rush, try yerba mate or green tea instead of coffee. Mix in some spearmint for a great tasting additive to any tea.

If you do decide to go with coffee, at least use almond milk rather than soy milk or dairy.

Almond milk is a better choice because many women have estrogen imbalances caused by too much soy in their diet, and many people have undiagnosed dairy allergies so milk and cream should be avoided in case you are one of them.

Use xylitol (can be found at Whole Foods or Amazon.com) instead of sugar. Xylitol tastes great like real sugar, but is not as sweet. Be sure to purchase xylitol that is not made from corn to avoid ingesting genetically modified corn.

Avoid all artificial sweeteners. These are terrible for you, because they create insulin responses and have been known to have negative effects on the body. Avoid agave as if it was sugar, because it is nutritionally the same as cane sugar, and avoid stevia, which has been shown to contribute to calorie dysregulation in rats, meaning rats fed stevia tend to consume more sugar than those who are not fed stevia.

Want to avoid all sweeteners? Tap some drops of pure vanilla extract into your coffee cup for a rich delicious scent and flavor with no sugar or calories!

By changing breakfast, you start the day right and it is easier to make better choices for the rest of the day.

You will have more energy, feel less bloated, and will see weight loss over time even if no other meals are changed.

That's why giving up the Cheerios® will make you a better cheerleader!

Please enjoy the sample smoothie recipes below to get you started, but feel free to experiment and create your own favorites.

Here's to you accomplishing your health and fitness goals! Cheers!

RECIPE #1:

Green Goddess Smoothie with Yerba Mate (this one packs some caffeine!)

- **Protein**. Start with Thorne® brand vegan protein powder in vanilla [scroll to Patient Express Registration and put in this code: "hcp1025841" to access].
- **Fiber**. Add a spoonful of chia seeds.
- **Fruit**. Select a 1/2 cup of blueberries as your fruit, either fresh or frozen,
- **Greens**. Add one handful of fresh or frozen spinach.
- **Liquid**. Use unsweetened vanilla-flavored almond milk.
- **(Optional) Caffeine**. Add one teaspoonful of yerba mate tea leaves.

RECIPE #2:

Pom-Pom Perfection Smoothie
(feel the power of pomegranate!)

- **Protein**. Start with Thorne® brand vegan protein powder in vanilla [scroll to Patient Express Registration and put in this code: "hcp1025841" to access].
- **Fiber**. Add ground flaxseed powder.
- **Fruit**. Add a fresh or frozen pomegranate (you only want the seeds, so if you go with fresh, you will need to open the fruit and scoop out the seeds. Don't worry about the white fluffy stuff— that is just added fiber!).
- **Greens**. One scoop of a powdered green source, such as Greens First.
- **Liquid**. Use coconut water (choose one that is not from concentrate, and make sure the only ingredient on the label is coconut water with no added sugars).

RECIPE #3:

Chocolate Kiss Smoothie
(decadent yet so good for you!)

- **Protein**. Start with Vega® brand in chocolate.
- **Fiber**. Add one scoop of hemp seeds.
- **Fruit**. Add two frozen strawberries.
- **Greens**. Add one leaf of fresh kale.
- **Liquid**. Use unsweetened coconut milk, available in the dairy aisle of most supermarkets.
- **(Optional) Caffeine**. If you need an extra jolt, try adding a half-teaspoon of powdered coffee (like Via® from Starbucks®) to turn this into a "mocha" chocolate kiss smoothie!