

Is breakfast the most important meal of the day?

This is not a word-for-word transcript.

Georgie

Hello, this is 6 Minute English from BBC Learning English. I'm Georgie.

Phil

And I'm Phil. Did you have any breakfast today, Georgie, or did you **skip** it?

Georgie

I did have some breakfast. On the way to the office, I got myself a pastry and a coffee. What about you?

Phil

I had a big bowl of porridge, but it was at six o'clock this morning so I'm hungry again now. And you might soon be hungry as well because we're going to talk about breakfast. How important is it? Let's start by hearing from Professor Alexandra Johnstone, a nutrition scientist who spoke to Ruth Alexander, host of BBC World Service programme The Food Chain.

Professor Alexandra Johnstone

I am supporting the meme 'breakfast like a king and dine like a **pauper**'.

Ruth Alexander

For you then, breakfast is the most important meal of the day.

Professor Alexandra Johnstone

I agree. So, it's really important, particularly for people who are trying to maintain a healthy weight and people who are trying to lose weight.

Phil

Alexandra says that you should 'breakfast like a king and dine like a **pauper**'. **Pauper** is an old-fashioned word for a very poor person. The expression means have a big breakfast and a small dinner.

Georgie

We're going to find out some of the reasons that Alexandra and other experts recommend doing this.

Phil

And as usual, we'll learn some useful new words and phrases. And remember – you'll find all the vocabulary and a quiz on our website, bbclearningenglish.com.

Georgie

OK. But first I have a question for you, Phil. According to a recent survey, which of the following is the most popular breakfast in the UK? Is it:

- a) eggs,
- b) toast, or
- c) cereal?

Phil

Well, I think people like to keep it simple so I'm going to say toast.

Georgie

OK. Well, we'll find out the answer later in the programme. Let's hear some reasons for why we should breakfast like a king or queen. Courtney Peterson, who researches eating behaviours, explains how the time of day affects how our bodies process food, on BBC World Service programme The Food Chain:

Courtney Peterson

And so, if you can eat a large breakfast in the morning, and/or I would even say a large lunch in the morning, your body's going to be better at **metabolising** that food. And what that means is your body's going to actually... your blood sugar levels won't **spike** as high, you might burn slightly more fat, you might burn slightly more calories from eating earlier in the day. Whereas if you had... if you eat most of your food later in the day, your **metabolism** is actually slower later in the day. So, for instance, if you ate the same, I don't know, bowl of ice cream in the morning, the afternoon and the evening, your blood sugar levels will **spike** significantly higher in the afternoon and the evening.

Phil

We heard the noun **metabolism**. This is a word that refers to the chemical processes in your body, and we most often use it to talk about those that convert food into energy. And we also heard had the verb form – **metabolise**.

Georgie

Courtney talked about blood sugar levels **spiking**. A **spike** is a sharp, pointed shape. If you see it on a line graph, it means that something has increased very rapidly. We often use the noun **spike** to mean a sudden increase in a value that is being measured. The verb **spike** means to suddenly increase.

Phil

We've heard that eating earlier in the day can be healthier for us. Now, people often don't eat breakfast, sometimes because they don't have time and sometimes because they are trying to save money. Let's hear again from Professor Alexandra Johnstone, talking to BBC World Service's The Food Chain.

Professor Alexandra Johnstone

Now, breakfast **skipping** is interesting because my own work would tend to suggest – and that sort of observational, large-scale, epidemiological studies would also support this – that people who have a regular breakfast are actually **leaner**. And my own work would tend to suggest that having your largest meal of the day in the morning period gives you a much better **appetite control**, which then means it's much easier to control food intake later in the day.

Georgie

Alexandra starts by mentioning 'breakfast **skipping**'. If you **skip** something, then you don't do it. Bad students might **skip** lessons – they don't go to them. If you **skip** a meal, it means that you don't eat it.

Phil

We also heard that people who have a regular breakfast are **leaner**. If someone is **lean**, then they're not fat.

Georgie

And one of the reasons given why people might be **leaner** is that they have better **appetite control**. **Appetite control** is where your brain decides how much you should eat.

Phil

Thanks, Georgie. Now, I think it's time that we heard the answer to your question.

Georgie

Yes, it is. OK. I asked, "According to a recent survey, what is the most popular breakfast in the UK?"

Phil

And I said, "Toast."

Georgie

...which was the most popular in London, but the most popular in the country as a whole was cereal, and that's according to a survey by a cereal manufacturer. So, I'm afraid you got it wrong. OK. Let's recap the vocabulary we've learned, starting with **pauper**, which is an old-fashioned word for a very poor person.

Phil

When we're talking about data, it **spikes** when it increases suddenly.

Georgie

Metabolism refers to the chemical processes inside your body, especially those which process food.

Phil

If you **skip** something, you miss it; you don't do it.

Georgie

If someone is **lean**, then they are not fat.

Phil

And finally, **appetite control** is how your brain decides how much you should eat. Once again, our six minutes are up, but why not head over to our website, bbclearningenglish.com, to try the quiz and worksheet for this episode? See you again soon.

Georgie

Goodbye!

Phil

Bye!

VOCABULARY

pauper

old-fashioned word for a very poor person

spike

sudden increase in a value being measured

metabolism

the chemical processes inside the human body, especially those which process food

skip

deliberately miss something, or not do it

lean

not fat

appetite control

how your brain decides how much you should eat