

**Open your eyes to porridge oats / Health Education Authority Oats Information Service.**

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**Open Your Eyes  
To Porridge Oats**

## Enjoy Healthy Eating

Enjoying healthy eating has never been as easy with such a colourful array of foods so readily available. Variety and pleasure are the keys to any healthy diet and small changes made to your diet over a period of time are often all that's needed.

Starchy foods such as bread, potatoes, oats, rice, pasta and cereals should form about half of your daily diet. Plenty of fruit and vegetables should also be eaten. As a result it will be easier to reduce the amount of fatty foods in your diet.

Foods high in fat, sugar or salt should be kept as an occasional treat.

When you're thinking about healthy eating, what better place is there to start than at breakfast time?

## Enjoy a Healthy Breakfast

As it's the first meal of the day, breakfast provides the body with the "get up and go" to ensure a good start to the morning. For ease and convenience, there is no better option than a breakfast cereal, providing starch, fibre, vitamins and minerals to the diet. However, it's hard to beat a bowl of porridge oats to set you up for the day.



Porridge oats are rich in starch and an excellent source of soluble fibre. They are also naturally low in salt and sugar. Combined with other valuable nutrients they contain, this makes them 'packed with goodness' and a natural breakfast choice.

The following table illustrates how easily porridge oats fit in with today's expert recommendations for an enjoyable and healthy diet.

**A typical bowl of porridge oats made with skimmed milk is ...**

- ✓ high in starch – the major part of a healthy diet
- ✓ a food low in saturated fat – reducing fat is the most important way to lower blood cholesterol
- ✓ rich in soluble fibre – can also help to lower blood cholesterol
- ✓ relatively low in calories – contains only 180 kcals a bowl
- ✓ a source of protein – important for healthy growth
- ✓ naturally contains vitamins – particularly vitamin E and thiamin which assists the body in using the energy from food
- ✓ a low sugar food
- ✓ a low salt food

## Living Life to the Full

Enjoying healthy eating is an important part of an overall plan for an active and healthy life. And the perfect partner to a busy way of life is a bowl of porridge oats, which gives you long and lasting energy.

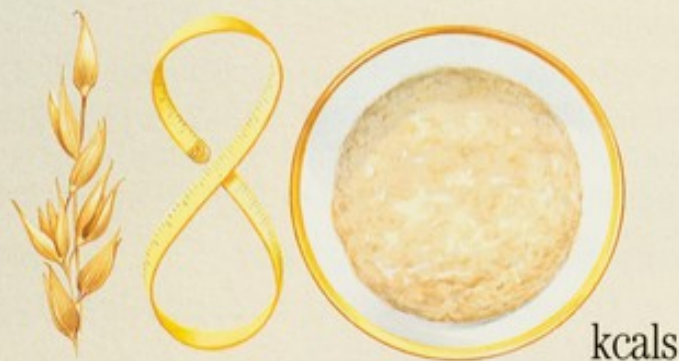
The starch in porridge oats is slowly digested by the body and provides a gradual release of energy which lasts long after breakfast, helping to prevent 'mid morning fade'. This can be especially useful for sustaining children through the morning at school and for providing essential long lasting energy for everyone who is physically active or enjoys exercise and sport.

## Weight Control

You may be surprised to learn that a bowl of porridge oats made with skimmed milk, gives you only 180 kcals.

What's more being a fibre rich food, porridge oats tend to be filling and to pass more slowly out of the stomach. They can therefore help to combat middle of the morning hunger pangs and assist with weight control (as part of a calorie controlled diet).

Remembering to include plenty of other starchy foods in the diet, will also help to displace other fatty and higher calorie foods.



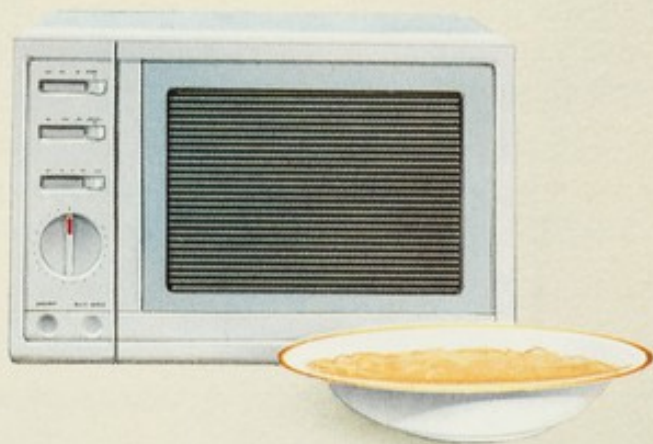
## Eating for Health

It's well known that a healthy diet and way of life can reduce the risk of many common diseases such as heart disease, cancer, constipation and obesity.

A high blood cholesterol is one of the major factors which increase the risk of heart disease and is strongly influenced by diet.

Choosing lower fat foods, especially those low in saturates, can help to reduce the levels of cholesterol in the blood. Foods high in soluble fibre such as porridge oats, may also help to lower blood cholesterol.

Oats are a useful food for diabetics since their starch and fibre content allows sugar to be released only gradually into the bloodstream.



## Microwave Convenience

Nowadays daily life often means juggling family, hobbies, jobs and leisure time. Using the microwave reduces the time needed for meal preparation.

For breakfast in a jiffy, just pop in a bowl of oats and low fat milk and enjoy the warm, creamy porridge only three minutes later.



## Porridge Ideas

There are many delicious and interesting ways to serve your daily bowl of porridge oats:

- arrange fresh, seasonal fruits and a generous spoonful of low fat fromage frais on the porridge serving.
- top your porridge with a mixture of dried fruits – apricots, apples, pears and prunes. A delicious high fibre way to start the day.
- raisins and a selection of mixed ground spices complement porridge superbly making a sumptuous and spicy change.

If cooking porridge oats in the microwave, remember to use a large bowl and do not cover. Microwave on HIGH/FULL power and stir briskly before serving.

The healthiest way to prepare your porridge is using skimmed or semi-skimmed milk or half milk, half water.



## Quick Homemade Muesli

*Serves 4*

225g/8 oz porridge oats, 125g/4 oz raisins or sultanas, 125g/4 oz chopped Brazil nuts and sunflower seeds.

Mix ingredients together and store in an airtight jar or container until required.

*To serve:* Add semi-skimmed or skimmed milk to own preferred taste and serve with freshly chopped apple and banana. Or for a change use dates, chopped dried apricots, pumpkin seeds or nuts to give a different variety and taste.

## Oaty Breakfast Yoghurt

*Serves 4*

225g/8 oz porridge oats, 60ml/4 tbsp plain low fat yoghurt, fresh fruit of your choice.

Stir the yoghurt until smooth and add in the oats. Top with peeled and chopped fresh fruit.



# Open Your Eyes To Porridge Oats



A Health Education  
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