
Book reviews

The breakfast book

Radd S, *Hodder Headline*, Sydney, 2003, 280 pages, \$19.95, ISBN 0-7336-1591-0

Nearly a quarter of the adult Australian population regularly skip breakfast, yet more and more research is demonstrating the nutritional and health benefits of a regular breakfast. DAA has recently participated in a television community service announcement encouraging breakfast consumption, and our dietary guidelines support it too. But sadly for many busy working people the alternative options of a snack on the way to work or midmorning—often high in saturated fat—is becoming the norm.

This new book from well known consultant dietitian Sue Radd is a wonderful resource to recommend to anyone seeking information and inspiration about why and how to get the breakfast habit. The first third gives an overview of breakfast habits in Australia over the past 200 years, current trends, and the latest scientific findings on benefits, including the role of breakfast in weight control, school performance, mood, and general good health. The next section provides advice on what makes a good breakfast, including advice on the best choices among popular breakfast foods and how to understand information on product labels. Specific advice is included for those seeking to reduce their cholesterol or lower their risk of diabetes. There are suggested menus and meal plans as well as interviews with Australian celebrities about their breakfast habits. The last section gives over 50 different recipe ideas for home-made breakfast options. There is a useful glossary and index provided.

The book is an inexpensive paperback with an attractive layout in a popular style, but without any colour illustrations. It comes with a foreword by Dr Rosemary Stanton and there are plenty of practical tips, tables of nutrition information, and lists of recommended food choices. The author gives answers to many of the common reasons people give for not eating breakfast, but the main emphasis is on the positive. The subtitle sets the tone throughout: Start the day right and enjoy greater health and vitality.

Very often the recipe section of a book like this seems like padding, but not in this case. There are many unexpected and delicious options to tempt the adventurous and promote increased variety in grain and fruit consumption. Instead of plain oat porridge, what about millet with macadamia nuts and currants, cinnamon spiced quinoa with dried fruits, African mielimeel porridge, or fig and almond couscous? There are recipes for smoothies and fruit dishes as you would expect, but also simple and unusual alternative toast spreads that can be made at home, like cashew, date and sprouted wheat, or avocado, coriander and tomato. Nutrient content values are provided with all of the recipes.

The health information throughout the book is written for the average consumer, not the professional, and there are no references provided. However the book's information is clearly well researched, up to date and reliable. Interested readers are directed to the www.sueradd.com web site, where there is an extensive bibliography of over

250 recent scientific articles about breakfast nutrition. The author does not avoid giving advice and making judgements about individual branded products, but this is done in a fair way that appears to be appropriately independent and balanced. In discussing breakfast food options, there is a definite emphasis on grains, fruit, dairy and soy, with very little information about eggs, meat or fish (except in the historical section), nor any discussion of the current fad of low carbohydrate eating. Perhaps in the next edition these topics could be covered in more detail.

There is no other book currently on the market that provides the same depth of information about breakfast for Australians seeking advice about the best way to start the day. Dietitians can be confident in recommending this book to any of their clients and will find it interesting to read themselves.

Peter Williams

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The omega-3 life program

Ratnesar S, *McGraw-Hill Australia*, Sydney, 2002, 196 pages, ISBN 0-074-71086-9

The central theme of Shamala Ratnesar's book, *The omega-3 life program* is the health implications of dietary long-chain omega-3 fatty acids. This is a stimulating subject for the informed health professional but for the general public it is complex and somewhat obscure. Before I sat down to read *The omega-3 life program* for the first time I asked myself who is the intended audience, what are their needs, might and will this book satisfy those needs? Even now, I am not sure I can satisfactorily answer these questions.

The omega-3 life program uses a tried and proven formula. The early sections of the book deal with the science behind the health implications of long-chain omega-3 fatty acids under headings such as Omega-3s in the Life Cycle, Omega-3s and Disease Prevention and Nutritional Management of Specific Conditions. The latter sections contain practical information about shopping, menus and recipes. The presentation is simple but effective and recipes are accompanied by attractive photographs. There is an extensive list of sources and references that many dietitians would find useful.

The text at times appears uneven. In general, most of the information presented and dietary recommendations are sound, though there are points of contention. Dietitians may find selective presentation of scientific information and some of the recommendations run contrary to the latest Dietary Guidelines for Australians. Presenting dissenting views on such issues is every author's prerogative and provides a point of difference but highlighting and explaining these key elements would have added substance to the book. Although the full gamut of potential health implications of long-chain omega-3 fatty acids is covered, the weighting to various topics could have been better. More of the text could have been devoted to the role of long-chain omega-3 fatty acids in the secondary prevention of cardiovascular disease.

This is an area where the scientific evidence is particularly strong yet just a few paragraphs are devoted to the DART study, Lyon Diet Heart Study and the GISSI trial. More space is devoted to the speculative effects of long-chain omega-3 on happiness, wellbeing and depression. The stated impact of different classes of fatty acids on HDL-cholesterol levels is questionable.

The tenor of *The omega-3 life program* tends to vary. At times it is light and accessible but other sections of the book, for example those dealing with eicosanoids, are complex and would be heavy going for most lay readers. Sometimes unrelated facts and comments are drawn simply together.

In my view *The omega-3 life program* tends to overstate the benefits of the recommended eating plan. To the health professional, claims that omega-3 fats are the key to longevity and helpful in preventing cancer are drawing a long bow. *The omega-3 life program* is an ambitious book but, in the end, it does not really work as a concept. It does not target a specific consumer need. The book's exploration of an area of nutritional science and its application probably reflect an academic interest rather than a consumer focus. In a way, *The omega-3 life program* may be more useful to dietitians who are seeking a simply written overview of the demonstrated and hypothesised effects of long-chain omega-3 fatty acids rather than to lay readers.

Bill Shrapnel
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Books received

ABC of nutrition. Fourth edition

Truswell S, BMJ Books, London, 2003, 152 pages, \$61.95, ISBN 0-7279 1664-5

Gastrointestinal nutrition

Anderson A, Shepherd S, Monash Medical Centre, Melbourne, 2003, 103 pages, \$60 (+ \$5 p & h), ISBN 0-9750347-0-7

Gut flora, nutrition, immunity and health

Fuller R, Perdigon G (editors), Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2003, 288 pages, \$213, ISBN 1-4051-0000-1

Medical nutrition & disease: a case-based approach. Third edition

Hark L, Morrison G (editors), Blackwell Publishing, Maldon, Ma, 2003, 472 pages, \$81, ISBN 0-632-04658-9

Nutrition and metabolism

Gibney MJ, Macdonald, Roche HM (editors), Blackwell Publishing, Oxford, 2003, 400 pages, \$81, ISBN 0-632-05625-8

Of interest in the journals

Biotechnology

Detecting genetically modified organisms. *Food Aust* 2003;55:451

This feature about AgriQuality covers a range of issues relating to biotechnology and GMO in particular, including a range of viewpoints concerning labelling and international trade.

Child nutrition

Reichman CA, Davies PSW, Wells JCK, Atkin L-M, Cleghorn G, Shepherd RW. Centile reference charts for total energy expenditure in infants from 1 to 12 months. *Eur J Clin Nutr* 2003;57:1060-7

This paper reports on the construction of centile reference charts for infants using data from TEE measures by the doubly labelled water technique in 162 Australian infants 1-12 months of age. The charts may act as a reference tool in studies of abnormal energy metabolism.

Diabetes mellitus

Dierckx N, Horvath G, van Gils C, Vertommen J, van de Vliet J, I De Leeuw, Manuel-y-Keenoy B. Oxidative stress status in patients with diabetes mellitus: relationship to diet. *Eur J Clin Nutr* 2003;57:999-1008.

This case control study of 30 diabetic patients and matched healthy adults found no relationship between blood levels of antioxidants and dietary intake in the diabetic subjects' levels of products, rather indicating oxidative damage were linked to saturated fat and cholesterol intakes as well as levels of endogenous antioxidants.

Dietary fat

König D, Väisänen SB, Bouchard C, Halle M, Lakka TA, Baumstark MW, Alen M, Berg A, Rauramaa R. Cardiorespiratory fitness modifies the association between dietary fat intake and plasma fatty acids. *Eur J Clin Nutr* 2003;57:810-5

This cross-sectional study of middle aged Finnish men (n = 127) found that plasma saturated fatty acids were significantly lower and PUFA significantly higher in the highest fitness tertile compared to the lowest, yet there were no differences observed for fitness tertiles and dietary fatty acid intake expressed as % energy.

Mattes R. Fat: the sixth taste—implications for health. *Food Aust* 2003;55:510-4

This review article considers the hedonics of dietary fat and the establishment of new understanding of links between post-prandial lipid metabolism and fat perception.

Dietary methodology

Novotny JA, Rumpler WV, Riddick H, Hebert JR, Rhodes D, Judd JT, et al. Personality characteristics as predictors of underreporting of energy intake on 24-hour dietary recall interviews. *J Am Diet Assoc* 2003;103:1146-51

This study of 52 women and 46 men found that body image and fatness influenced ability to accurately report energy intakes.

Flavonols

Huxley RR, Neil HAW. The relation between dietary flavonol intake and coronary heart disease mortality: a meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies. *Eur J Clin Nutr* 2003;57:904-8

The meta-analysis of seven prospective cohort studies found a combined risk ratio of 0.80 (0.69-0.93) adjusted for CHD risk and other dietary factors comparing those in the top and bottom third of dietary flavonol intakes.

This list of the best kids books about breakfast is sure to include a new favorite for the voracious young reader in your life! Looking for a list of the best children's books about breakfast? Curated by Bookroo: The Children's Book Experts. Children's literature has many notable options when it comes to breakfast. To help you find the right books for you and your young reader, we've compiled a list of the best kids books about breakfast. Our list includes picture books and chapter books. The Breakfast Book - Free download as Text File (.txt), PDF File (.pdf) or read online for free. Recipes for tasteful breakfasts. Much more than documents. Discover everything Scribd has to offer, including books and audiobooks from major publishers. Start Free Trial. Cancel anytime. The Breakfast Book. Uploaded by. monteверano. Taking a multifaceted approach to the story of the morning meal, The Breakfast Book collects narratives of breakfast in an attempt to pin down the mottled history of eating in the A.M. In search of what people have thought and written and tasted about breakfast, Andrew Dalby traces the meal's origins back to the Neolithic revolution. He follows the trail of