

# Boosting Iron and Calcium for Kids

## The Importance of Iron & Calcium

**Iron and calcium are important nutrients** that support developing brains and strong bones.

**Iron is an important dietary mineral for a number of key functions in the body** like transporting oxygen, the release of energy and red blood cell production.

**Calcium also plays a crucial role** in the healthy functioning of nerves and muscle tissue.

**Many young children still struggle to get enough iron and calcium in their diet<sup>1</sup>**



## Which foods contribute to iron and calcium in children's diets?

**Kids need a variety of foods** containing iron and calcium to help them meet their daily requirements. According to the last children's dietary intake survey, the following foods contribute to iron in Kiwi children's diets<sup>1</sup>.

### LARGEST CONTRIBUTORS

Breakfast cereals  
Bread and rolls  
Beef and veal

### OTHER CONTRIBUTORS

Potato, kumera and taro  
Beverages  
Vegetables  
Fruit

### DID YOU KNOW?

Eating foods containing Vitamin C such as fruits and vegetables together with iron-containing foods helps increase iron absorption<sup>2</sup>.



**Breakfast cereal is the largest contributor of iron in Kiwi children's diets<sup>1</sup>**

Milk and milk products, including cheese and yoghurt, contribute to the majority of calcium in young children's diets<sup>1</sup>. It is not surprising that **dairy milk remains the largest single contributor to calcium** intakes<sup>1</sup>.



A bowl of Kellogg's cereal and a glass of milk can provide up to

30%

of young kids' daily iron and calcium needs\*.

Children who choose cereal for breakfast are also **more likely to meet their nutrient requirements for the day**<sup>3</sup>.

Starting the day with a balanced breakfast provides children with a good opportunity to meet their daily nutrient requirements, especially for nutrients like iron and calcium.



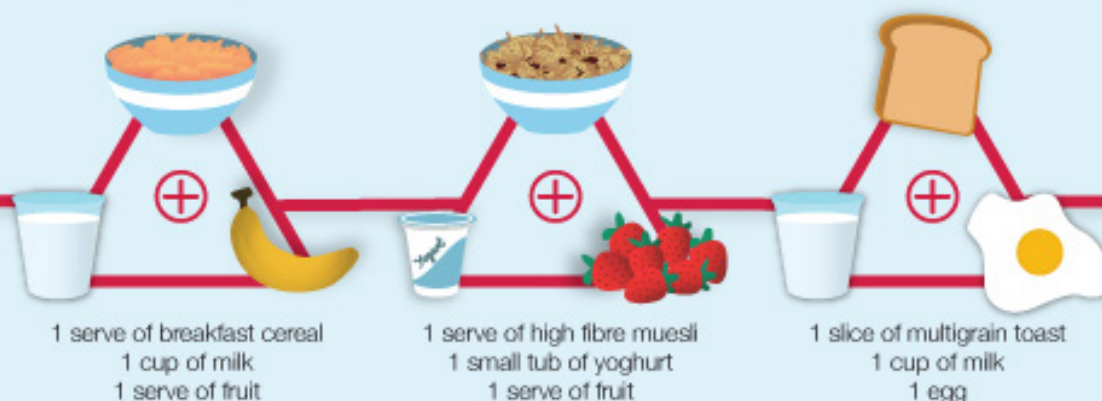
## What is a balanced breakfast?

To maximise the nutritional opportunity breakfast brings, **there should be 3 components** to the breakfast meal:

1 grain serve + 1 dairy serve + 1 fruit or protein serve



Although breakfast cereal and milk are great for iron and calcium, there are many combinations that can make breakfast varied and appealing. **Some suggestions for a balanced breakfast are:**



Start the day with a balanced breakfast, it's the start of the day's possibilities.

### References:

1. Ministry of Health, 2003, Food/NZ Children: Key results of the 2002 National Children's Nutrition Survey, Wellington: Ministry of Health New Zealand.
2. Rossander L, Hallberg L, Björn-Rasmussen E. Absorption of iron from breakfast meals. *Am J Clin Nutr*, 1979; 32:2484-2489.
3. Deshmukh-Taskar PR, Nicklas TA, O'Neil CE, Keast DR, Raddiffe JD, Cho S. The relationship of breakfast skipping and type of breakfast consumption with nutrient intake and weight status in children and adolescents: the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey 1999-2006. *J Am Diet Assoc*, 2010; 110:869-878.

\* NHMRC Nutrient Reference Values 2005 for 4-11 years. A serve of Kellogg cereal and 250mL of milk typically has 3mg of iron and 300mg of calcium.