Breakfast! “It’s the most important meal of the day.” How many times have you heard that?

It’s as true today as it was 50 years ago. And because parents don’t really have much control over their kids’ lunches while at school, nutritionists say the morning meal becomes all that

more important.

While almost any breakfast is better than no breakfast at all, don't "make do" with a doughnut or a pastry. They're too high in calories, sugar and fat. And they don't contain the nutrients a kid really needs.

There are food choices that are convenient and taste good that can be part of a healthy diet.

WHOLE GRAIN BLUEBERRY MUFFINS

1 cup quick cooking oats

1 cup hot tap water

2 cups whole wheat pastry flour

1/2 teaspoon salt

1/2 teaspoon baking soda

1-1/2 teaspoons baking powder

1/2 cup agave nectar or honey

1/2 cup organic sugar

1 cup plain (or soy) yogurt

2 eggs, lightly beaten

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1/2 cup vegetable oil

1 cup flax seed meal

1 pint fresh blueberries

Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray the top of 2 standard-size muffin tins with non-stick cooking spray and line with 24 paper liners. Set aside.

In a large liquid measuring cup, combine oats and water. Set aside.

In a medium-sized bowl, whisk together flour, baking soda, baking powder and salt.

In a large bowl, whisk together agave nectar, sugar, yogurt, eggs, vanilla, oil and flax meal. Add in oatmeal and dry ingredients, and stir until just combined. Fold in blueberries.

Fill liners about three fourths of the way full. Bake for 20-25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center muffins comes out clean. Makes 2 dozens muffins.

MICROWAVE BREAKFAST COBBLER

1 (16-ounce) can sliced peaches, drained

1 (16-ounce) can pear halves, drained (use equivalent amount of ripe fresh fruit when available)

1 (6-ounce) cup pitted prunes, halved

1 teaspoon grated orange peel

1-1/2 cups low-fat granola

In 6-cup shallow microwave bowl, toss peaches, pears, prunes, orange peel and orange juice.

Top with granola. Microwave on *high* for 5 minutes. Let stand for 2 minutes. Spoon into bowls.

Serve with plain yogurt if desired. Makes 4 to 6 servings.

BANANA, ORANGE & DATE OATMEAL

2 cups orange juice

1 cup water

1/4 teaspoon salt

1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

3/4 cup chopped dates or raisins

1-1/2 cups old-fashioned or quick oats

1 medium-ripe banana, mashed

In a medium saucepan, bring juice, water, salt and nutmeg to a boil; stir in dates and oats. Return to a boil; reduce heat. Cook 1 minute for quick oats or 5 minutes for old-fashioned oats, stirring occasionally. Stir in banana. Let stand until oatmeal has desired consistency. Makes about 4 servings.

NON-FRIED FRENCH TOAST

Nonstick cooking spray

1 slightly beaten egg

1 slightly beaten egg white

3/4 cup fat-free milk

1 teaspoon vanilla

1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

8 1-inch-thick slices French bread

1/4 teaspoon finely shredded orange peel

1/2 cup orange juice

1 tablespoon honey

1 teaspoon cornstarch

1/8 teaspoon cinnamon

Coat a large baking sheet with nonstick cooking spray. In a pie plate, combine egg, egg white, milk, vanilla and 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon. Soak bread slices in egg mixture for about 1 minute per side. Place on prepared baking sheet.

Bake in a 450°F oven for about 6 minutes or until bread is lightly browned. Turn bread over and bake 5 to 8 minutes more or until golden brown.

Meanwhile, for orange syrup, in a small saucepan, stir together orange peel, orange juice,

honey, cornstarch and 1/8 teaspoon cinnamon. Cook and stir until thickened and bubbly. Cook and stir 2 minutes more. Serve with warm orange syrup. Makes 4 servings.