



News Release – 28 May 2012

Teenagers: No time for mealtime

But teens say dinnertime is the one meal they will not skip!

Teenagers up and down the country are skipping meals because they just don't have the time to eat, reports a new survey on behalf of *Lean on Turkey* carried out by Opinion Matters.

However, teenagers also say that dinner (aka the evening meal) is the one meal they will not go without!

Here's what the *Lean on Turkey* survey found:

- **Meal skipping** - 75% of teenagers are likely to miss/skip a main meal during the day.
- **Dinner is on the table!** – However, dinnertime is one meal of the day that most teenagers will not miss, with only 3% of teens saying they would miss/skip their dinner (evening meal), compared 52% who skipped breakfast and 18% who missed out on lunch.
- **Run out of time** – The main reason for teenagers missing/skipping a meal is that they '*just don't have time*', with six out of ten teenagers citing this as the number 1 excuse.

"Skipping meals on a regular basis, particularly in the teenage years is a recipe for disaster in health terms," warns nutritionist, Dr Carrie Ruxton. "The negative effects are compounded in the teenage years as they are going through a period of rapid growth and development and, in the case of girls, are laying down nutrient stores which could be needed for future child-bearing."

Dr Ruxton continued by saying "However, it's great to hear that the majority of teenagers will not miss their evening meal. This gives them the opportunity to choose wholesome foods which contain valuable nutrients for health. Aiming for breakfast plus a healthy

evening meal every day could deliver at least three quarters of a teen's daily nutritional needs."

The survey which covered just over 1,000 teenagers, both boys and girls, also found the following:

- **What a load of junk** - 3 out of 10 teens replaced a main meal 2-6 times a week with food on the go or junk food
- **Fast food** – over five out of ten teens said they would replace a main meal with food from a fast food outlet.
- **Girls v boys** - Boys are the least likely to skip a meal with 32% saying they would never skip a meal, compared to only 19% of girls who said they would never skip a meal.

"Cooking a healthy and tasty meal for today's teenager is a tough challenge. Teenagers are far more demanding than they were say 10-20 years ago and parents, due to their own busy lives, have less and less time to spend in the family kitchen," said parent and world renowned chef Marco Pierre White.

"The modern day parent therefore has to be extremely clever when it comes to cooking. For instance, a healthy turkey stir-fry or the family favourite bolognaise meal doesn't have to take hours to prepare, in fact it can be quick, easy and stress free with the right ingredients and knowledge," added Marco.

For quick, healthy, main meal inspiration visit www.leanonturkey.co.uk

All figures, unless otherwise stated, are from Opinion Matters. Total sample size was 1,003 children aged 13-18. Fieldwork was undertaken between 26 – 30 April 2012.

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