

Overnight Oats

Makes 3 servings

Nutrition per serving (using 1% milk) – calories: 254

fat: 5 g (saturated: 1g, unsaturated: 3g), carbohydrates: 41g, protein: 12g, fiber: 7g, sugar: 14g

Overnight oats are the breakfast game-changer. Mix it up the night before, and grab it in the morning on your way out the door to enjoy later, cool or warmed. Mason jars are popular containers for overnight oatmeal. You'll need three of the pint-sized jars to accommodate this recipe. The chia seeds thicken the oatmeal (and help you feel full), but they can be omitted. If you heat the mixture before serving, it will thicken further, in which case you might want to add a little extra liquid to adjust the consistency to your liking.

Strawberry-Banana Overnight Oats

1 ripe banana, plus extra for topping

½ cup nonfat Greek or regular yogurt

1 tablespoon sweetener of choice, such as pure maple syrup, honey, light agave or brown sugar

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon

⅛ teaspoon salt

1 cup 1 percent milk or milk of choice (unsweetened soy, almond, rice, oatmeal and coconut milk are all suitable substitutions)

1 cup old-fashioned (rolled) oats

⅔ cup chopped strawberries, plus extra for topping

2 tablespoon chia seeds

In a medium bowl, lightly mash the whole banana with a fork. Whisk in yogurt, sweetener, vanilla, cinnamon and salt. Divide mixture among three jars or plastic containers. Stir in one third of milk, oats, chopped strawberries and chia seeds into each jar. Refrigerate until the oats are hydrated and mixture is thickened, about four hours and up to three days. Before serving, adjust consistency (add more liquid if needed) and top with additional strawberries.

Variations

Mango and Coconut - Swap mangos for strawberries, and add 1 tablespoon coconut flakes.

Pears, Almonds and Ginger - Swap banana for a peeled and grated pear, and substitute 2 tablespoons roughly chopped crystallized ginger for strawberries. Top with 2 tablespoons toasted slivered almonds.

Peanut Butter and Chocolate Cup - Omit strawberries. Whisk 1 tablespoon cocoa powder and 1–2 tablespoons peanut butter with milk mixture. Top oats with chopped peanuts and chopped dark chocolate.

Apple, Cranberry and Walnut - Omit banana and add a diced apple. Substitute ¼ cup dried cranberries for strawberries. Top with 2 tablespoons toasted chopped walnuts.