

Millennial Breakfast Habits & Morning Routines

A Research Study by Aida Rasmussen, Anna Streeter & Tori Pawlyk

Research Question & Design Statement

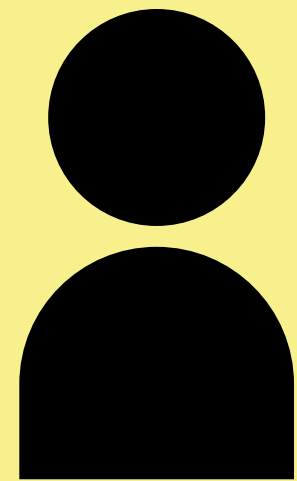
What are the factors that promote or dissuade millennials from developing or keeping a breakfast routine?

Our goal is to understand the influences that affect Millennial breakfast habits and morning routines.

Survey Development

Target Audience

Millenials and Gen Z adults (born
between 1984-1994, or 1995-2003)



Topics to investigate

Food prep

Ideal morning
routines

Grocery shopping
habits

Routines and
energy levels

Thoughts on
exercise

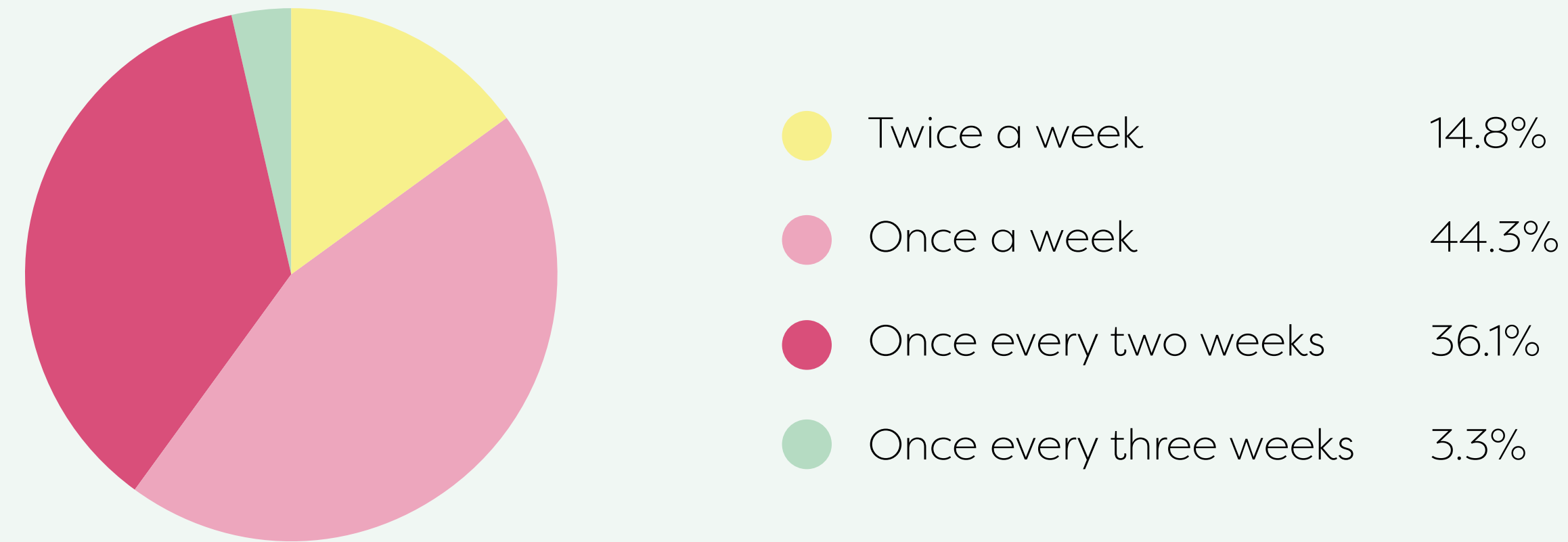
Mental health

What did they say?

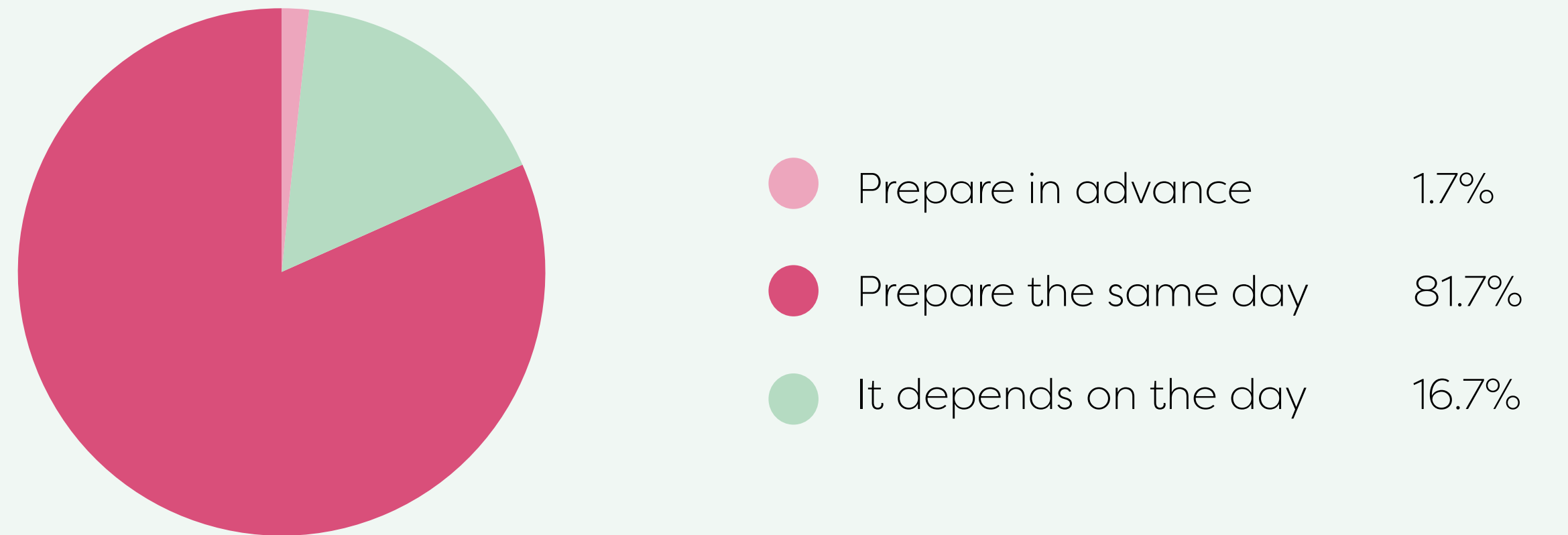
62 survey responses

Participants were born between 1983 and 2002

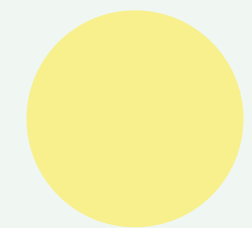
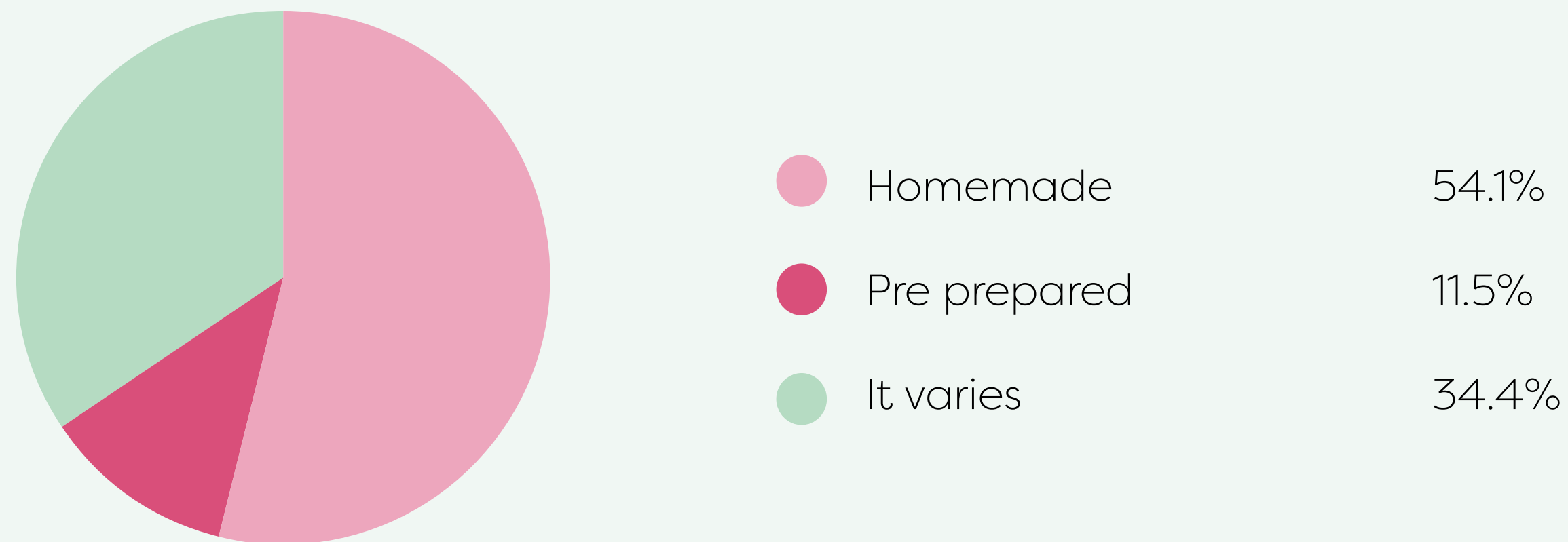
About how often do you grocery shop?



Do you buy/prepare your breakfast in advance or make it the same day?



When eating breakfast, are the meals homemade or bought prepared from a store?



“In my experience [ready made meals] are not really good and they’re super expensive.”



With the amount you spend on ingredients, you can make like eight times as much at home.”

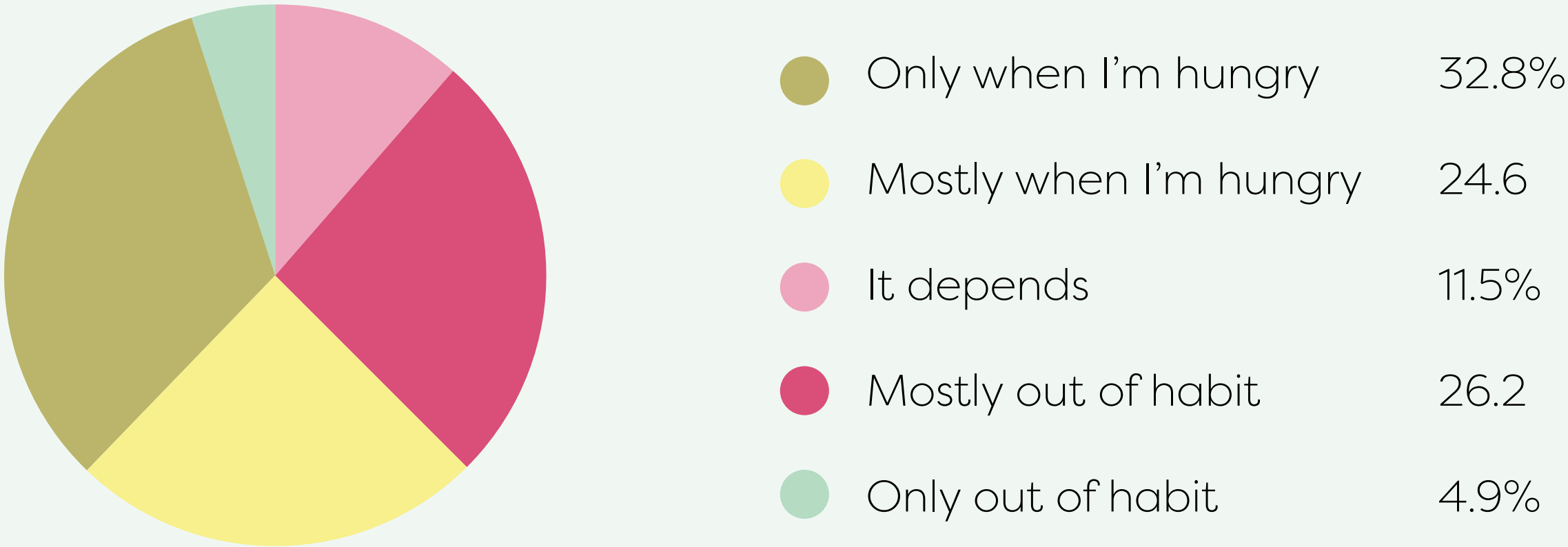
Brianna, 27

What do the experts say?

“Highly processed foods are palatable and satisfy human taste for salty and sweet foods. Despite their convenience, palatability, longer shelf life, improved food safety, endless choice, and affordability for consumers, **highly processed foods are widely criticised for not contributing to a healthy diet.** Aggressive marketing of such foods, often accompanied by health and nutrition claims (for example, “high in vitamins”) that can obscure potential harms, drives and distorts consumer demand. Processed foods thus present a dilemma for public health, food policy, and consumer choice.”

-Martin White, *Professor of population health research*

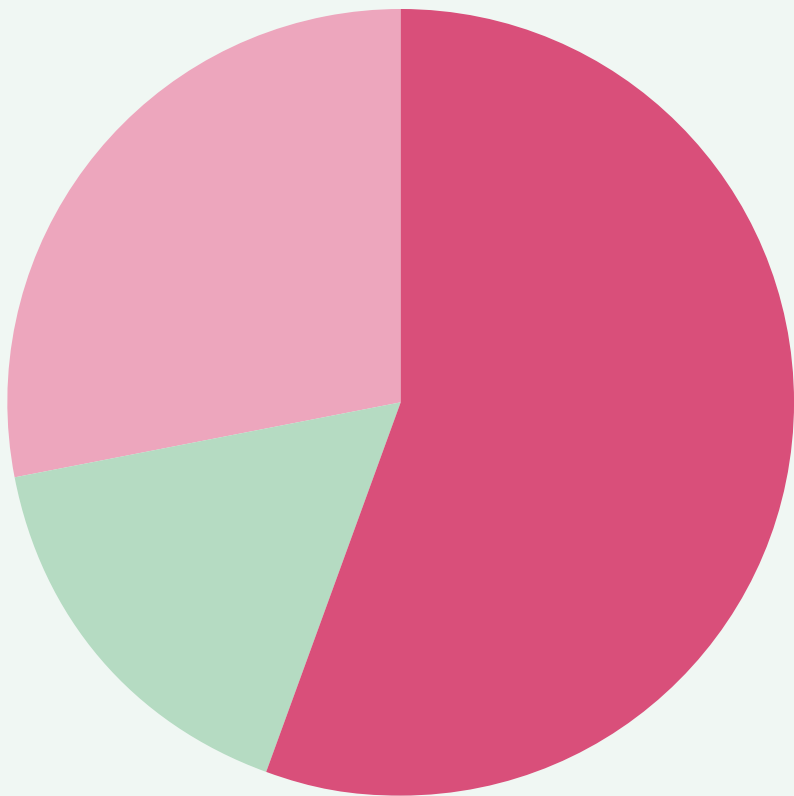
Do you usually eat breakfast out of habit or only when you're hungry?



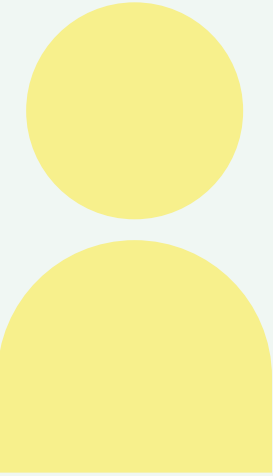
When you eat is important for several reasons– such as the daily rhythms in your body and brain. Eating at consistent times solidify daily rhythms and benefit your health. (I.E. metabolism) This is because certain cells work more during the daytime than night.

-Nicholas A. Lesica, Conversation about Healthy Eating

How often do you eat breakfast in the morning (before noon)?



| | |
|-----------|-------|
| Always | 27.9% |
| Sometimes | 55.7% |
| Never | 16.4% |

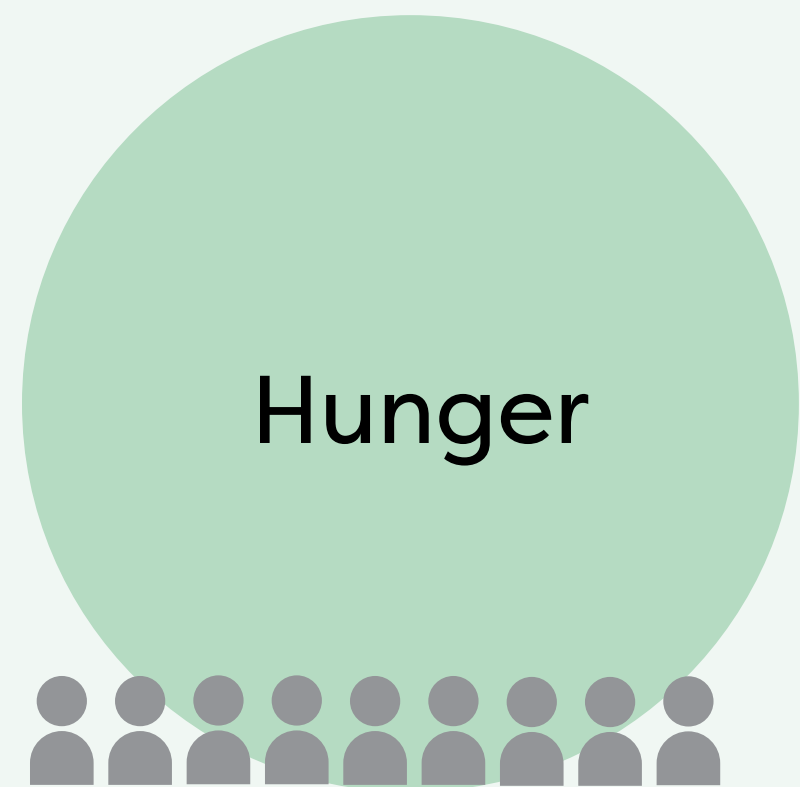


Brianna, 27

“Especially now that I’m pregnant I HAVE to eat something in the morning or I start feeling nauseous/have no stamina. But even before being pregnant I’m the kind of person who wakes up super hungry so even if I’m eating leftovers or non-breakfast food I just need to have something in the mornings.”

Does skipping breakfast have an effect on your day?

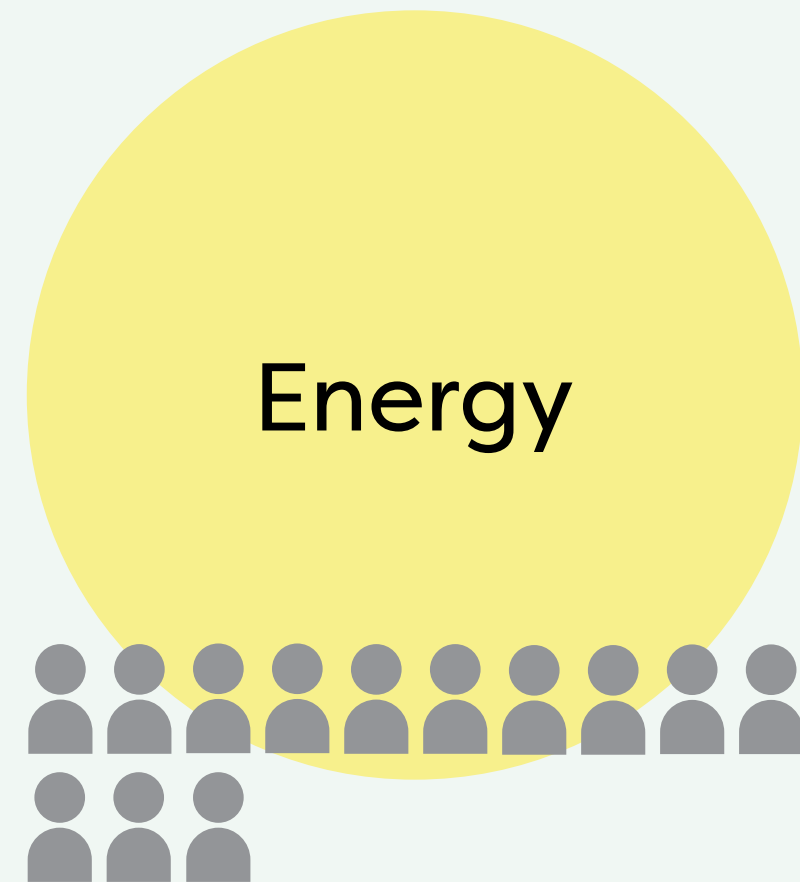
58 responses



"I think it causes me to be hungry throughout the day to the point where I'm snacking on junk food for a quick source of energy."

"Makes me hungrier for lunch."

"Yes, since I don't eat early I have a bigger lunch."

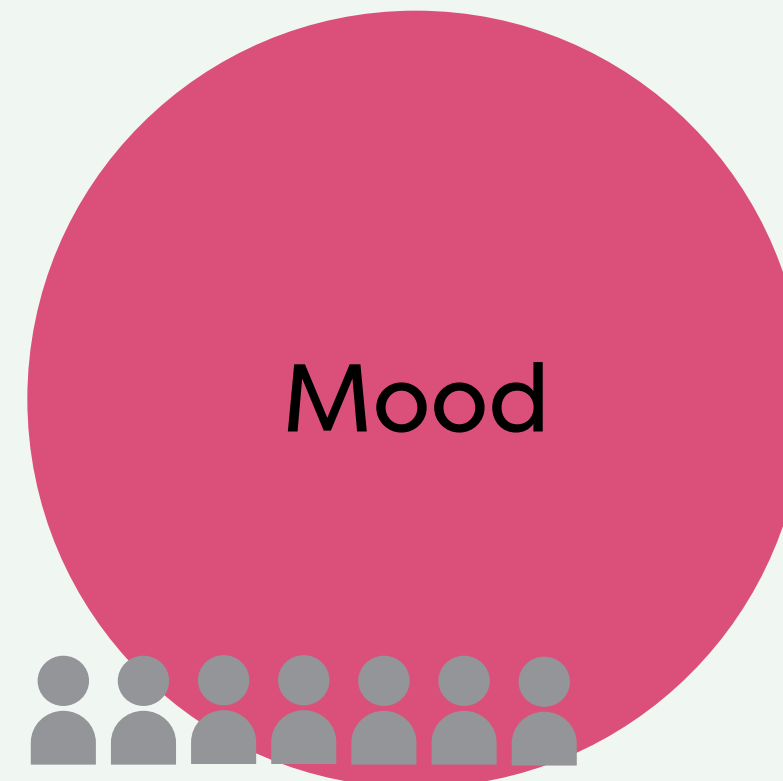


"Yes, skipping breakfast means that I have lower energy and am more tired."

"I have less energy and can't concentrate."

"I definitely cannot function normally if I skip breakfast. I also workout in the morning so I need the extra energy."

"I have more energy, keeps me awake during the day longer."



"Eating breakfast puts me in a better mood."

"Skipping makes me pissed."

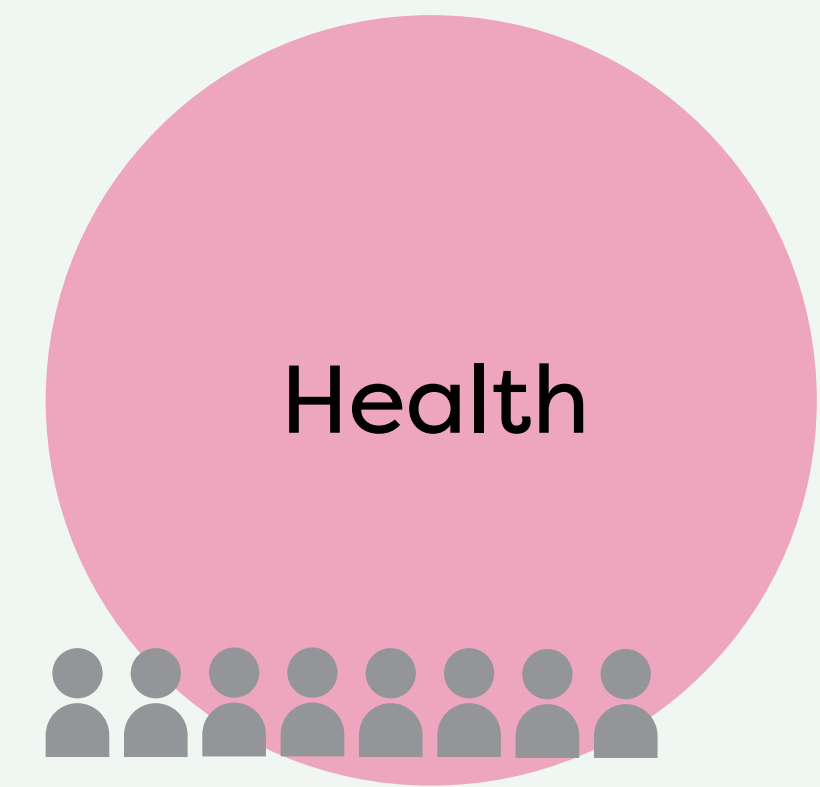
"Yes, if I don't eat breakfast I'm tired, distracted, hungry, and lethargic."

"If I eat breakfast I'm able to focus better."

"Yes, Less energy, super cranky, stomach growling, design thinking at a minimum, too tired to conduct design research methods, creativity low, and just thinking about when I will get to eat next."



"I don't think it has any effect."

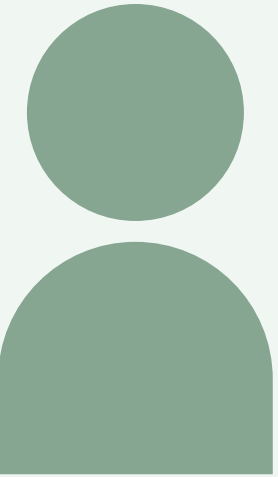


"Yes, because I need to eat in order to take my daily medication."

"Yes, i feel sick and get migraines if I don't eat during my usual time"

"I'm currently trying to gain weight so breakfast helps spread out my meals throughout the day."

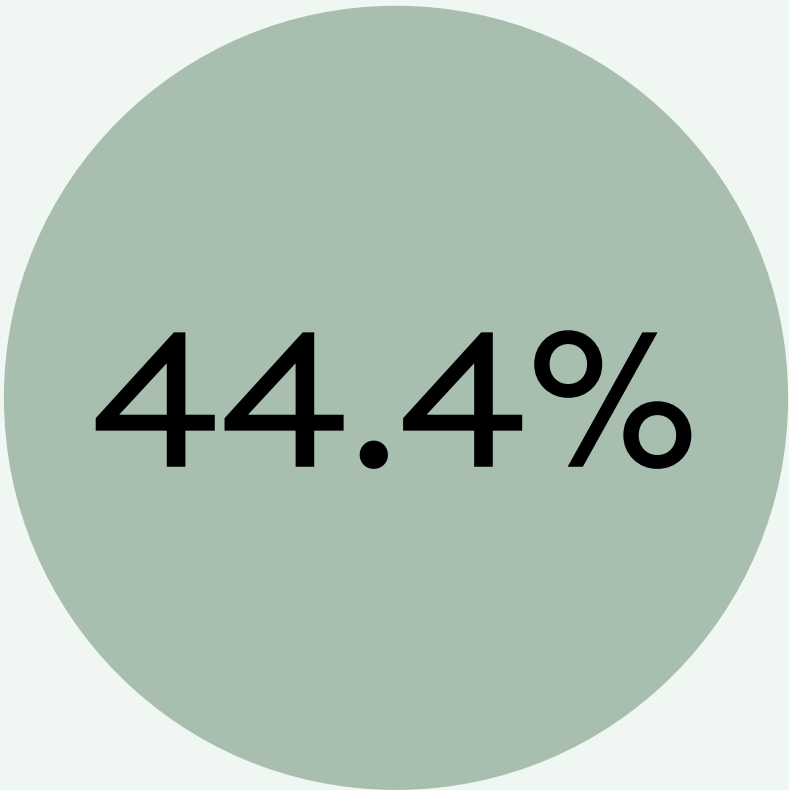
If breakfast is the most important meal of the day, why are so many people skipping it?



“I usually don’t eat breakfast on work days. I give myself just enough time to get ready in the morning. If I do eat it’s on a day off. I feel like I have more energy when I don’t eat.”

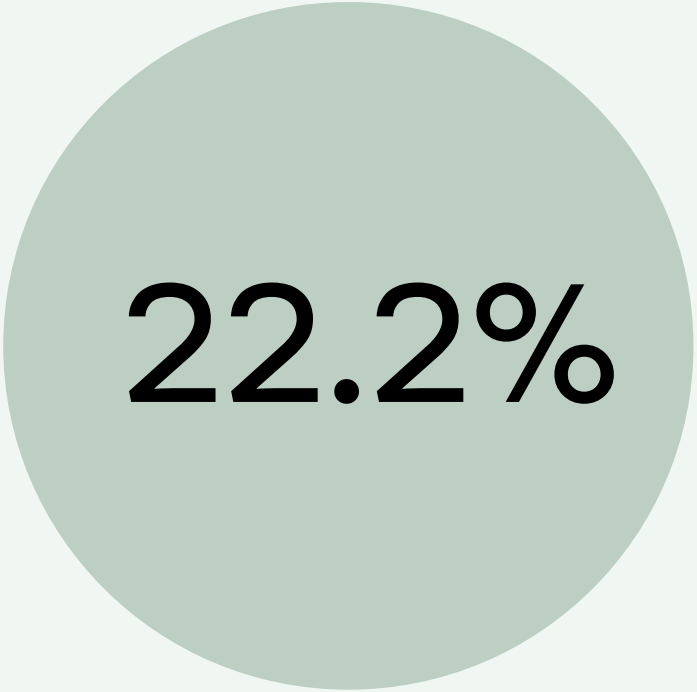
Peter, 26

Out of those who responded that they **never** eat breakfast in the morning..

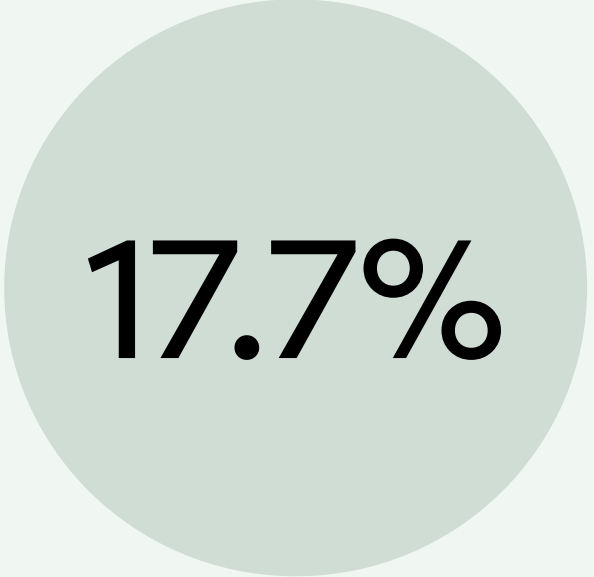


Said their reasons were sleep related

Waking up right before class/work or sleeping in.

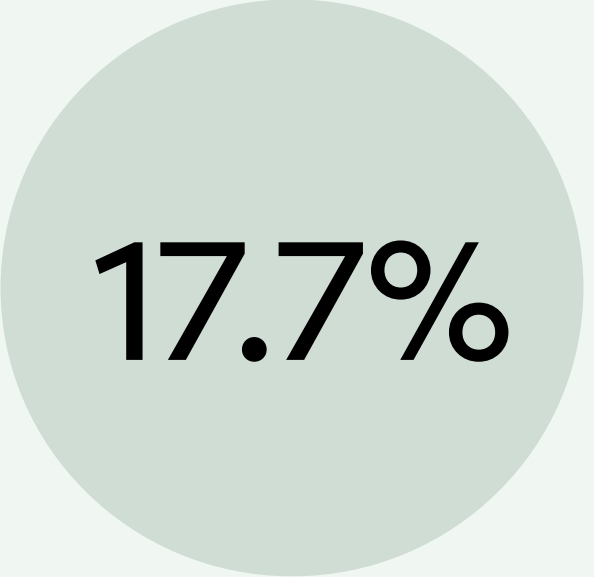


Said they didn’t have an appetite



Said their reasons were work related

Demanding schedule or early morning shifts



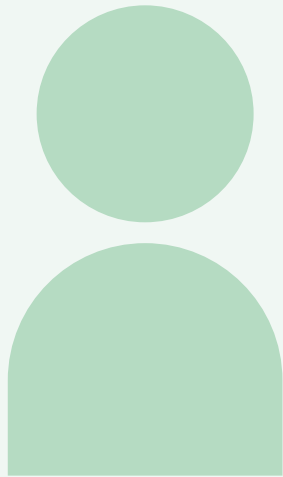
Said it was because of fasting

Meet our interviewees

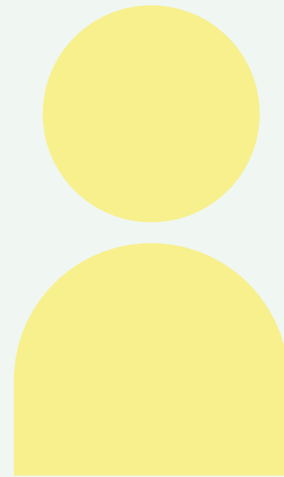
Millennials seem to agree that it's good to eat breakfast in the morning. But what are the external factors that cause one to skip regardless of the health and routine benefits?

Also, could there be other influences that should be considered in a person's morning routine before even addressing the first meal of the day?

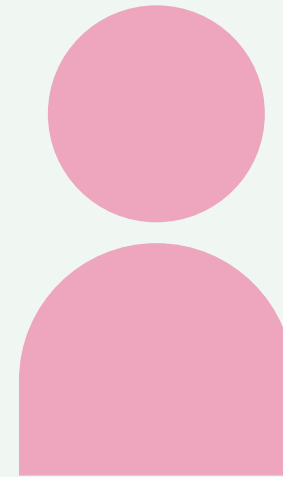
In this section we'll look at **ideals**, **mental health**, and **energy**



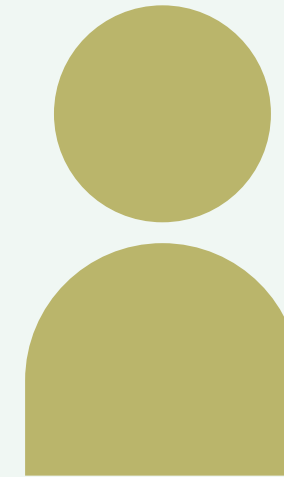
Mike, 28



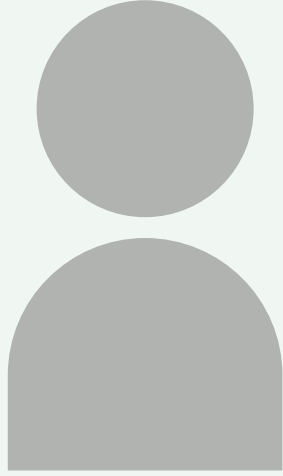
Brianna, 27



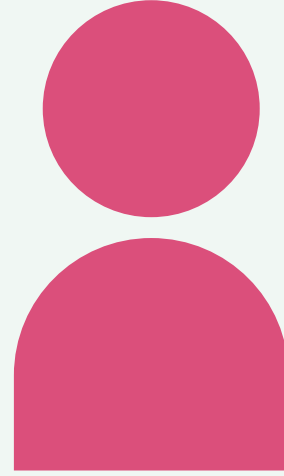
Nathalie, 28



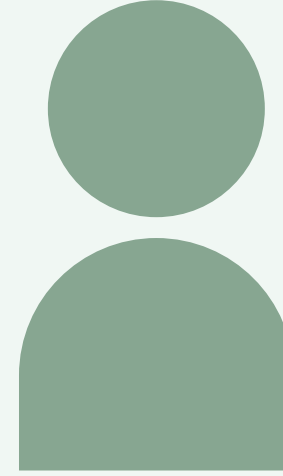
Anthony, 24



Arturo, 29



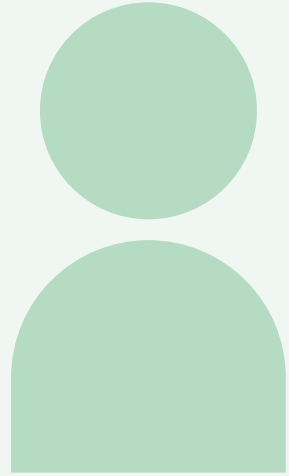
Liz, 24



Peter, 25

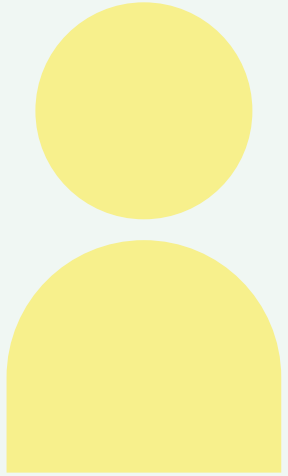
Ideals

If you could create your ideal morning routine, what would it look like?



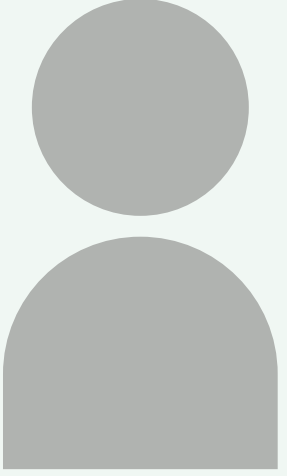
Mike, 28

“My ideal daily routine would be a consistent time of waking up, to be able to make time to shower and take a walk.”



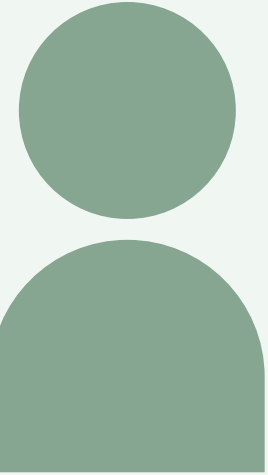
Brianna, 27

“We live near a really pretty forest preserve that I like. In the morning, first thing, I’d love to go out there. Would like to make time sit with a book or chill, go to church, go for a walk.”



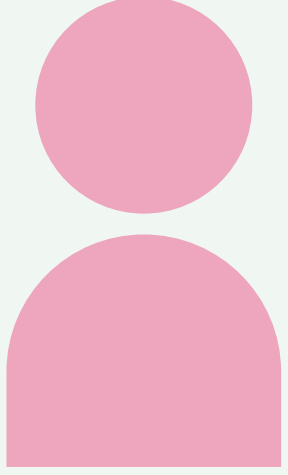
Arturo, 29

Enjoys having 1-2 hours to self before starting the day.
Small portion, high quality meal with coffee (eggs and toast, smoothie)



Peter, 25

“I would enjoy having breakfast be a part of my routine. Wake up, make breakfast, shower, go to work.”



Nathalie, 28

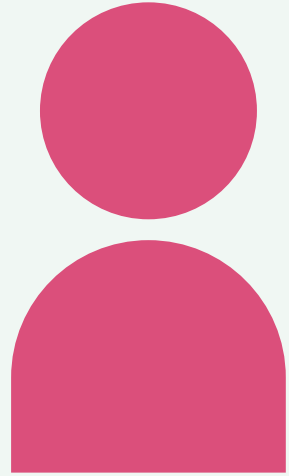
“Ideally would exercise in the morning. Early morning bike ride. Then come home, shower, and eat breakfast”

When asked, several participants said they would like to go on a walk in the morning. Walking and exercise is an ideal for most people.

Most ideals were not hard to obtain. Barriers included mainly time and energy.

Mental Health

What do you most look forward to in the morning? What do you least look forward to?

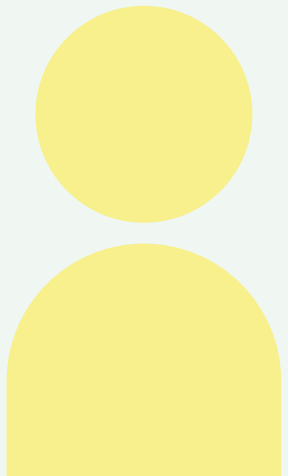


Liz, 24

“I like to be able to sit and listen to a podcast in the morning. It’s not really a time thing, it’s just an anxiety thing.

Even as far as a morning routine, I just feel like I’m too anxious to start working as soon as I get up.

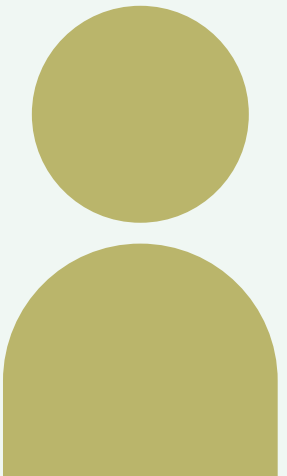
I feel like your mornings should be time to reflect but we just rush into everything.”



Brianna, 27

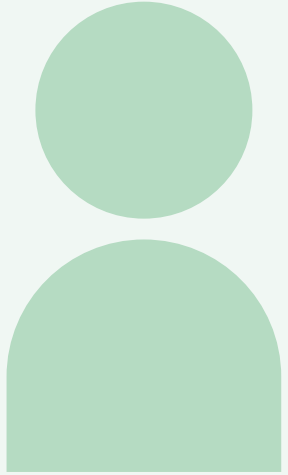
“It helps me to get up at a certain time everyday. It’s good for my mental health to take a walk in the morning.”

Recognizes that routines have a positive impact but struggles to stick to one.



Anthony, 24

Feels a sense of dread in the morning from the weight of responsibilities.



Mike, 28

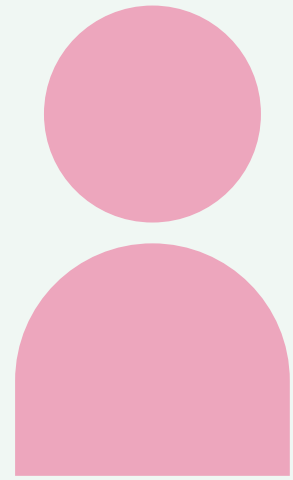
The thing he looks forward to the least: “dreaded tasks” Remembering things that he has to do that day that he’s been putting off.

Three interviewees expressed that they feel anxious when they wake up or tend to dread certain responsibilities first thing in the morning.

This anxiety can lead to a loss of appetite in the morning.

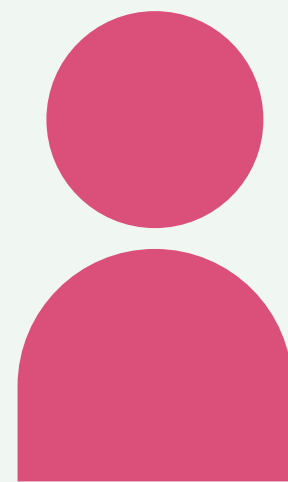
Energy

What gives you energy in the morning?



Needs to eat breakfast to maintain energy throughout day.

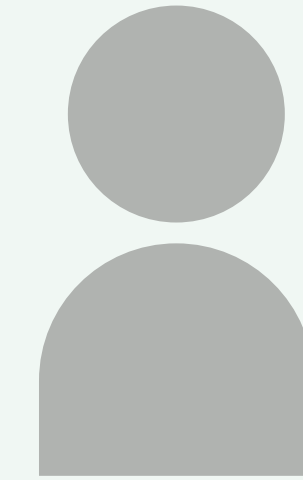
Nathalie, 28



“I just got an espresso maker so I like to make a latte in the morning.”

Also loves showering in the morning.

Liz, 24

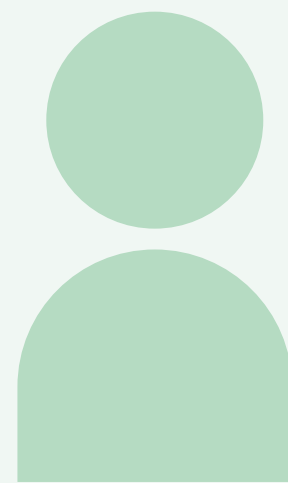


1-2 hours of reflection time and coffee- whole bean, coffee press process.

Arturo, 29

“Millennials may wake up and not be hungry, but the hunger comes on through the day and **can effect mood and energy**. So eating meals like lunch or a later snack may be more anticipated.”

-Sigrid A. Gibson, *Nutritional Scientist*

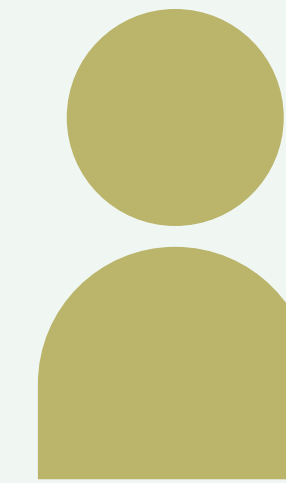


“I usually have that morning energy.”

Likes getting tasks done in the morning.

Drinks coffee at work depending on how sluggish he feels.

Mike, 28



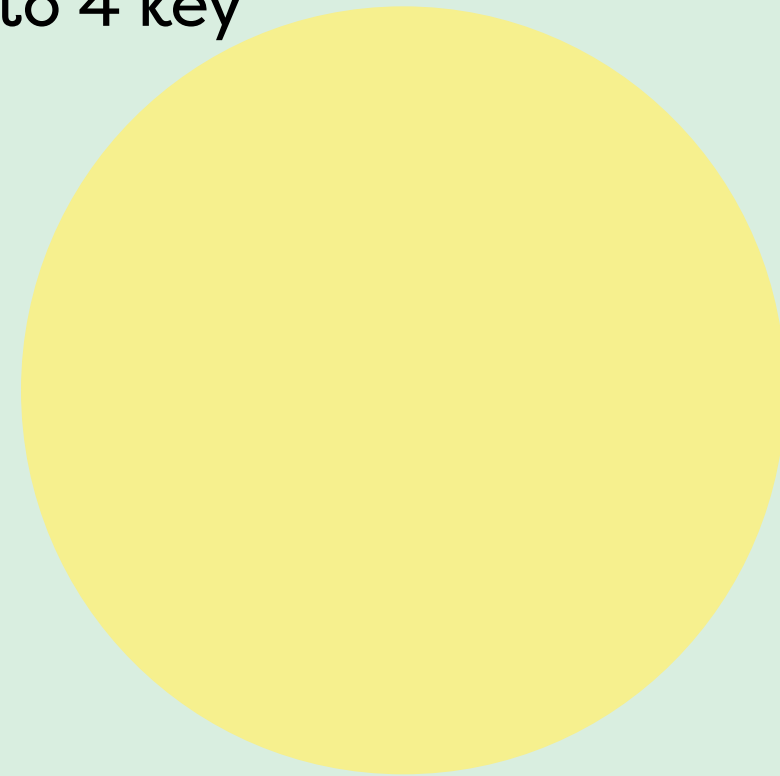
Hit training, yoga, ab workouts, etc. followed by a meal.

Yoga stuck as a habit because the it seems to be a simple foundational exercise that was easy to build on.

Anthony, 24

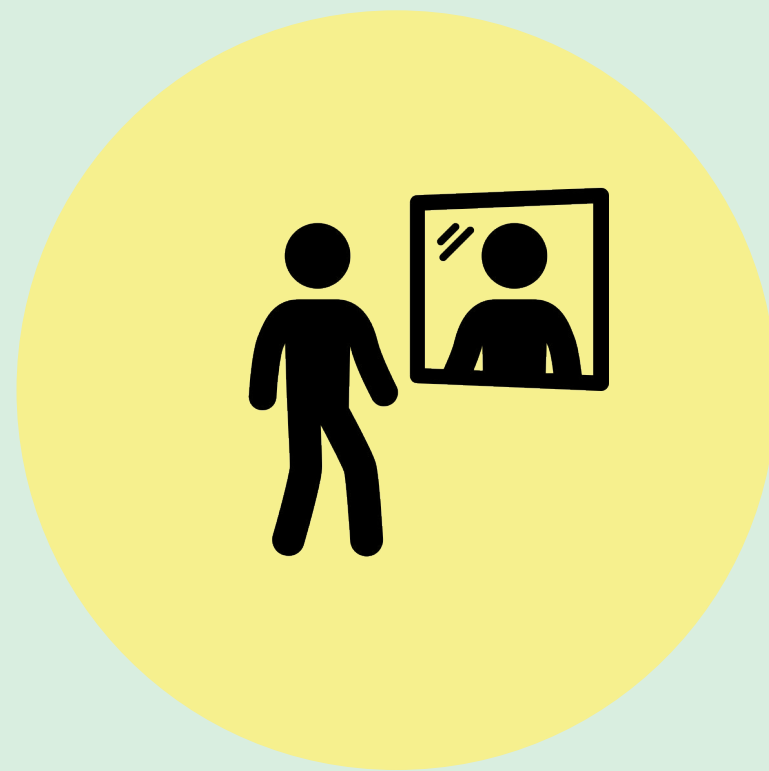
The Road to Routine

Ritualizing a healthy breakfast requires a bottom up approach to wellness. Our data points to 4 key influences.



Wake up!

According to our research, waking up regularly at about **6-8 am** increases your chances making breakfast a routine.



Light exercise - - - - Getting ready - - - - Caffeine Ritual - - - - - Quiet time - - - - -



Light exercise

Most of our interviewee's said that would like to go for a walk, a light jog or practice yoga in the morning.

"Yoga stuck as a habit because the it seems to be a simple foundational exercise that was easy to build on."

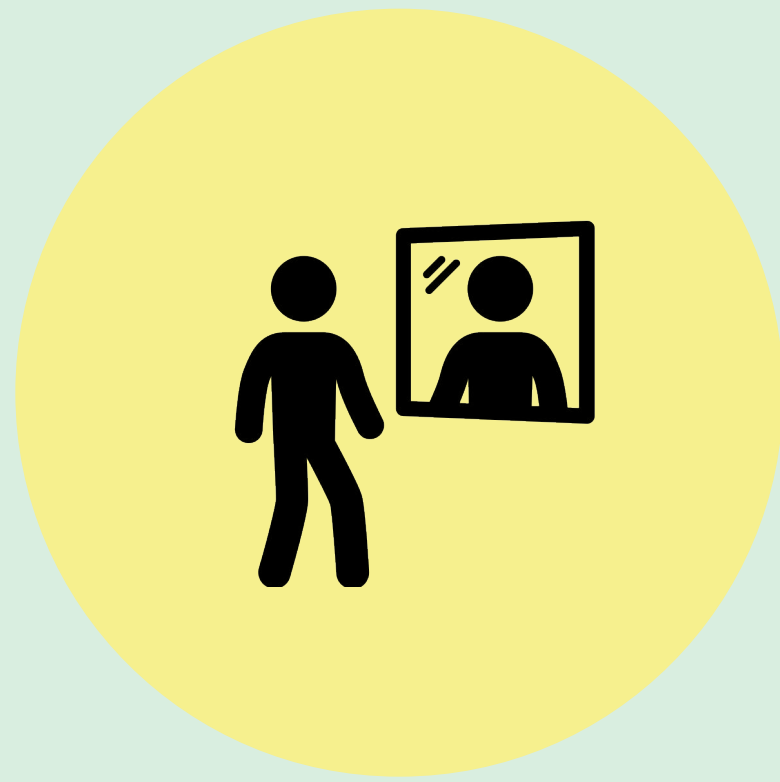
—Anthony, 26



Caffeine Ritual

According to the NCA, 64% of Americans drink coffee every day.

Not only is drinking coffee a norm, several of our interviewees say that making coffee is a daily ritual, which can take up to 15 minutes to prepare.



Getting ready

Self image can make or break your morning, according to our research dress and skincare can set the tone for your morning rhythm.

“Something I really look forward to in the morning is my skincare routine”

—Anthony, 26

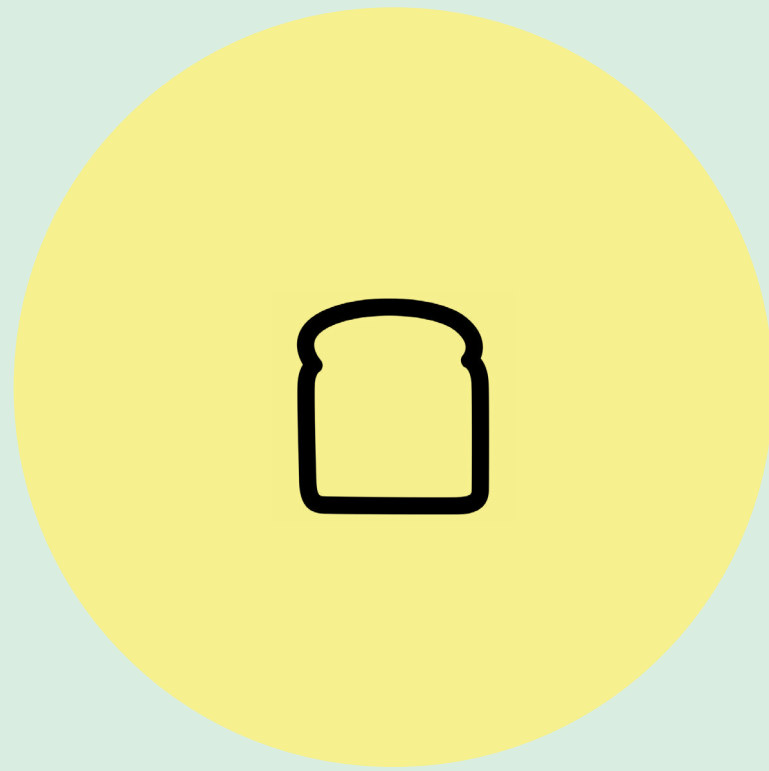


Quiet time

Quiet time is a very important morning ritual which can take many forms. When explaining how interviewees liked to find peace in the morning many said walking, reading or

“It helps me to get up at a certain time everyday. It’s good for my mental health to take a walk in the morning”

—Bri, 27

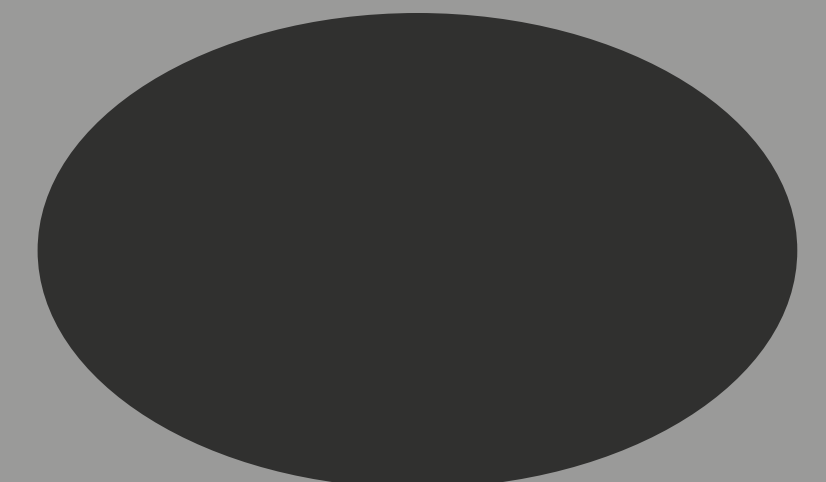


● A Light Breakfast

Most of interviewees concluded that while the ideal would be to eat breakfast, the breakfast would be something simple like toast or granola.

Pit-falls...

While arriving at a light, regular breakfast seems like an easy task, the steps before this can easily become derailed with bad habits.



When asked why individuals don't practice their ideal morning virtues, these three factors had a big roll to play:

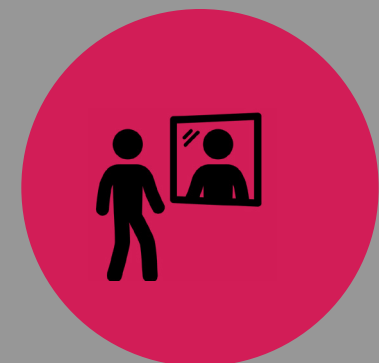
Unhealthy/irregular Eating

As we learned from our secondary research, unhealthy eating and eating at irregular times not but throws of your chemical biology, but have a physical impact and your mental wellbeing

Negative self image

Deregulated energy

Deregulated appetite



Deregulated Work Schedule

Some of the interviewees we interviewed stated that they don't eat breakfast regularly because their work schedule is irregular. The impacts may also result in irregular stress hormones production, which affects appetite.

Deregulated energy

Schedule disruption



Screen Fatigue

Screen fatigue is a phenomenon we all know well. The blue light is known to not keep you up, but also disrupt sleep patterns, causing a less deep rest.

Deregulated energy

Schedule disruption



Takeaways



A consistent morning routine is generally desired by most millennials. Specifically one that allows for quiet time or exercise, followed by a healthy breakfast.



Energy and mental health play a large part in a person's motivation to implement, keep, and maintain their ideal morning routine. Anxiety especially can be a hindrance to one's willingness to set aside time to exercise and eat.

Thank you

