



Fearing the “Freshman 15”

Many first year students will gain weight, but not always the feared 15 pounds and not always during freshman year. Studies indicate students on average gain 3-10 pounds during their first 2 years of college. Most of this weight gain occurs during the first semester of freshman year.

College has many temptations, from the all-you-can-eat dining hall to late night socializing. For many students this is the first time they are able to make decisions on the when, where and how much they want to eat.

In addition to the temptations, there is also the pressure to do well in school. The extra stress and lack of sleep may lead to additional caloric consumption with less exercise than in high school. Many students suffer from homesickness and sadness while adjusting to college life which may trigger overeating.

Why Worry about Weight Gain?

Weight above a healthy range will increase a person's health risks. Overweight people are more likely to have high blood pressure, high cholesterol, breathlessness and joint problems. Weight gain is usually secondary to poor diet and lack of exercise, which over time may lead to heart disease, obesity, type 2 diabetes and some cancers.



Easy Ways to Reduce Calories

One pound is equal to 3,500 calories. That seems like a lot, but if you consume an extra 12 ounce can of coca cola each day, in 25 days you will gain a pound of additional body weight. In 50 days two pounds and in 100 days four pounds. Try water or unsweetened tea for better drink choices. If you still need your caffeine fix, try diet soda or a small cup of coffee with skim milk.

How to Avoid Gaining Weight...

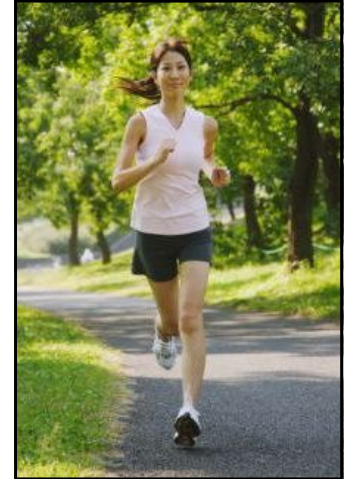
- Avoid eating when stressed, while studying or while watching TV
- Eat slowly
- Eat at regular times and avoid skipping meals
- Keep late-night snacking to a minimum
- Pick lower-fat options, such as low-fat milk instead of whole milk
- Watch the size of your portions, follow the Healthy Plate
- Keep healthier snacks like fruits and vegetables in your room instead of chips, cookies and soda
- Avoid vending machines and fast food as much as possible

What if I Gain Weight?

Don't freak out! Review your dietary, exercise and sleep habits. Also remember stress may cause weight gain. Lifestyle changes can help manage weight.

Alcohol Consumption: Excessive drinking not only leads to health problems, but also to weight gain. Alcoholic beverages are high in calories and are often consumed with calorically dense foods.

Smoking: Although cigarettes may suppress the appetite, smoking can make exercise and even normal activity such as walking across campus or climbing stairs more difficult.



Exercise: Research indicates students who exercise at least 3 days a week are more likely to report better physical health, greater happiness and increased time productivity than those who do not exercise. Try to fit 30 minutes of physical activity into your schedule each day. Ways to increase your daily physical activity include walking briskly across campus, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, riding a bicycle instead of taking a bus and taking stretch breaks during long classes or while studying. Getting involved in work-out classes at Yates or intramural sports will help increase physical activity.

Sleep: Sleep has been linked to maintaining a healthy weight and is also a great way to manage stress that can prompt overeating. Aim for 7-8 hours of sleep each night. Easy ways to ensure adequate sleep include keeping a regular sleep schedule by getting up and going to bed around the same time each day, napping as little as possible, avoiding caffeine after 3 pm and eliminating exercise, watching TV or listening to loud music before bed.

Information compiled from TeensHealth.org

Try the Healthy Plate Method!



Healthy Plate

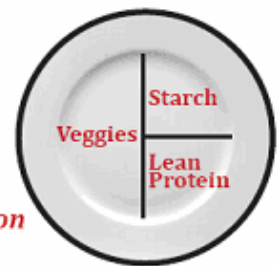
The easiest way to meet your daily food recommendations is to follow

the "healthy plate" composition:

- Half plate of veggies or a fruit/veggie combination
- Quarter plate of grains/starchy veggies
- Quarter plate of protein (meat, fish, beans and tofu)

Also, try these tips for healthy eating:

- To control portion size, try using smaller plates, bowls and cups
- Avoid stacking your plate with food
- Drink small glasses of skim or low-fat milk, or 100% juice



Scared you might be on your way to gaining the "freshman 15?" Schedule an appointment with Leo's Registered Dietitian at kh332@georgetown.edu. For more information on nutrition look online for the Healthy Hoya's Eating Smart. nutrition booklet.

