

Freshman 15

Recent studies have concluded that a number of first year university students will gain weight over the course of the school year, with a rapid weight gain in the first couple of months. The good news is that you don't have to be destined to fall victim of the "Freshman 15".

Most first year university students gain weight because of all the temptations that come along with university life. You are out on your own, with the freedom to eat what you want, when you want. You may also not be getting as much exercise as you did in high school and over the summer months. Not to mention added stresses of school can trigger overeating.

People who are overweight are more likely to have high blood pressure, high cholesterol and joint problems, which increase your risk of heart disease, type 2 diabetes, obesity and the development of certain cancers. Unhealthy food choices don't provide the balance of nutrients your body needs.

During your 20's you are still building bone mass. Your bone health is influenced by your diet and fitness level. Dark pop interferes with the absorption of calcium and thus negatively affects your bone density. Eating 3 servings of Milk Products daily along with doing weight bearing exercises will help build bone mass.

How to Avoid Gaining Weight?

Establish good habits:

- Eat well balanced meals
- Regular physical activity daily
- Get enough sleep

Healthy Eating Tips:

- Eat slowly
- Don't skip meals
- Choose lower fat options (i.e., 1% or skim milk, light peanut butter; low cal salad dressing)
- Watch your portion sizes. Use Canada's Food Guide to help you with proper portion sizes
- Keep healthy snacks on hand
- Drink 6-8 cups of water daily
- Be physically active! Aim for 30-60 minutes of activity each day