

planning guidelines

the importance of meals



You may not be able to eat meals at the same time everyday, but meals still are important. Under normal conditions it's a good idea to eat every three or four hours; under "college conditions," the same holds true, but the day may start and end later.

The following tips for healthy eating will help to give you more energy and brainpower:

Though it may be tempting to sleep right through the morning meal, skipping breakfast tends to make you feel crabby mid-morning and often promotes overeating in the afternoon and evening.

Consider the first meal you eat as breaking the fast. Breakfast doesn't have to be a big production and it does not need to be breakfast foods. Be creative...try a peanut butter sandwich, a bowl of soup or just cold cereal and milk. To get your body going, try to eat your first meal within an hour of waking.

Make time for lunch and dinner. If too much time elapses between meals you may feel out of control and overeat when you finally do sit down to eat. If you aren't going to be near a dining hall around mealtime, take a bag lunch for your backpack.

Plan for your snack attacks.
Good snacks include:
cereal and milk,
soup,
toasted English muffin
with peanut butter
to name a few.

All of us occasionally eat when we're not hungry, but it is useful to identify and learn to manage non-hunger eating. Before you eat, decide whether you truly are hungry. Are you eating food because your body needs food, or for some other reason? It's always fine to eat when you're hungry. Eating when you're not hungry will happen too, so be prepared.

■ *Learn to manage the food/mood connection*

We often resort to food to cope because it's comfortable and familiar. If you eat for reasons other than hunger, you won't feel satisfied. Label your feelings and respond to them with something other than food. If you're bored, create a list of things to do rather than eat. Make your list now, so that you're armed and ready when you need it. Some possibilities for the list are reading a magazine or doing a crossword puzzle.

■ *Become aware of the non-hunger cues that motivate you to eat*

When the non-hunger cues hit, give yourself an arbitrary amount of time-say five minutes -to determine if you really want to eat. Then determine a realistic portion of food, such as a coffee mug of pretzels or a plate of cookies. Sit down and face the food. When you've finished, move to a new chair, room or engage in another activity.

■ *Make eating a pure experience*

When you eat, try and separate what you are doing from what you are eating. Leave your bedroom, get away from the desk and don't drive and eat. Focus on what you are eating. Inattentive eating translates into overeating.

■ *Have a support network*

Many college students feel lonely and sad when they leave home. When the going gets tough, know that you can call a friend, call home, email your buddy, write your feelings in a journal, take a walk or just scream and shout. Always remember that you can ask for help from your Residence Hall Advisor or the school health service.

Sample eating plans to accommodate even the strangest schedule.

SLEEPING IN ON A CLASS DAY

12:30 - 1:00pm	"brunch"	yogurt and toast
4:30 - 4:45pm	snack after class	banana, snack bar and water
6:30 - 7:30pm	dinner	stir-fried chicken with vegetables and rice fruit salad frozen yogurt, milk
10:30pm - 12:00am	midnight breakfast	bagel with peanut butter glass of skim milk

EARLY CLASS DAY

8:00am - 8:30am	breakfast	cereal, milk, fruit and toast
11:45am - 12:30pm	lunch	turkey sandwich, small bag of chips, fruit, water
5:30pm - 6:30pm	dinner	salad veggies, baked potato, baked chicken, milk scoop of ice cream
10:30pm - 11:00pm	study break	slice of pizza, water

ON THE FLY

10:00am - 10:15am	walking to class	bagel and coffee
2:00pm - 2:30pm	lunch on the run	roast beef wrap and water
5:00pm - 5:30pm	snack before class	soup and toast
8:00pm - 8:30pm	late dinner	cheese omelet, toast and salad, milk