

display some differences; specifically, male bulimics are more often gay than female bulimics. The doctors suspect that pressure within the gay community to be thin may push more gay males into eating disorders.

Bulimics sometimes give themselves away by buying huge quantities of groceries. They may run to the bathroom after every meal; one SMU woman would stand in the shower with the water running to drown out her retching noises. SMU's Hardy recommends that if a student suspects her friend is bulimic she point out the health risks—erosion of teeth by vomit, heart irregularities, ruptured esophagus and cessation of menstruation—and suggest a visit to the health service. But friends should not be discouraged if the overtures are rejected: bulimics take an average of five years to recognize that they are sick and to seek help.

Daunting odds: Once the student asks for help, she—or he—has barely taken the first step back to health. "Treatments of anorexia nervosa and bulimia are among the most unsatisfactory in clinical medicine," conclude David Herzog and Paul Copeland of MGH. No therapy or drug really helps more than one-third of the patients. An equal fraction improve a little, while the other one-third get no better. Between 2 and 9 percent of anorexics die, most from suicide or cardiac arrest.

In the face of these daunting odds, programs to counsel, treat or simply listen to the victims are continuing to grow.

Some supplement student-health clinics; in 1984 Harvard-Radcliffe students formed their own group, the Eating Concerns Hotline and Outreach (ECHO), to offer peer counseling. "There is a pressure here to be successful," says codirector Sarah Ackerman. "You're not supposed to feel bad. ECHO acknowledges that eating problems exist and that people aren't alone anymore."

Many clinics, both on campus and off, find that the best treatment combines behavioral, group and family therapy. Some two-thirds of patients with anorexia or bulimia have severe personality problems that require extensive psychotherapy. Others can benefit from simple support groups. Take the one at the University of Pittsburgh: meeting once a week for informal discussions, women share experiences and encourage each other to kick their dangerous habits. Meg Edwards, who now purges once a month instead of three times a day, credits the group with making her "realize the destructive way I was trying to make myself stand out. I thought bulimia made me special—but I found out there are many other people who thought just like I did."

In the stressful world of Academe, more and more students seem to think like Meg, and colleges are increasingly trying to help them realize that food is not the enemy.

SHARON BEGLEY with SARAH OKESON in Evanston, SUSAN EVANS in Dallas, AMY DOCKSER in Cambridge, JOHN BURKMAN in Pittsburgh and bureau reports.

Newsweek On Campus Poll: Food, Tolerable Food

Despite their grumbling, students give campus food surprisingly good marks. Still, they're eager to supplement it; one-third are classed as heavy snackers, taking snack breaks three to five times a week. The overwhelming majority also opine that they eat more junk food than other Americans. That may be why nearly half the respondents ballooned in freshman year: 34 percent gained 10 to 20 pounds and 12 percent gained more. Bulimia is not so rare: 36 percent say they binge and purge or know someone who does.

What is your opinion of the quality of food served in your dining halls and snack bars?

Better than home	2%
About the same as home	10%
Not as good as home but not bad	60%
Not very good	16%
Terrible	4%

How often do you eat in dining halls?

Eat all or most meals there	19%
Eat some meals	37%
Hardly ever eat there	42%

Is nutritional information posted in your campus dining halls?

Yes	21%
No	54%

Would you say that college students eat more, less or about the same junk food as most other Americans?

More	66%
Less	4%
About the same	29%

Are college students more or less conscious of healthful food than most other Americans?

More conscious	21%
Less conscious	29%
No different	47%

What are your favorite snack foods? (Multiple responses permitted.)

Fruit	52%
Pizza	41%
Cookies and brownies	37%
Potato chips and pretzels	37%
Ice cream	34%
Candy	27%
Popcorn	26%
French fries	25%
Hamburgers	23%
Yogurt	23%
Cheese and crackers	23%
Salad	20%

How many evenings a week do you usually take a snack break?

Light snackers (1 to 2 times a week)	29%
Moderate snackers (3 to 4 times a week)	24%
Heavy snackers (5 to 7 times a week)	33%
Don't take snack breaks	13%

Do you usually eat snacks in addition to, or instead of, meals?

	Males	Females
In addition to meals	77%	61%
Instead of meals	19%	36%

Do you consider yourself overweight, underweight or about right?

Overweight	29%
Underweight	8%
About right	62%

There is a syndrome called bulimia in which people binge and then force themselves to throw up to lose weight. Have you, or has someone you know, ever done this?

I have done this	7%
I know someone who has	29%
No	63%

For this NEWSWEEK ON CAMPUS Poll, The Gallup Organization conducted 516 face-to-face interviews with college students on 100 college campuses nationwide between Oct. 21 and Nov. 6, 1986. The margin of error is plus or minus 6 points. "Don't know" responses omitted; percentages may add up to more than 100 when multiple responses are permitted. The NEWSWEEK ON CAMPUS Poll, © 1987 by NEWSWEEK, Inc.