

The WELL NOW

"Many candles can be lighted from one candle without diminishing it." Talmud The Student Health Center Newsletter WINTER EDITION 1993

INSIDE

- Does Sugar Really Satisfy Your Body's Needs?
- The Success Story of a Dieter Who Quit
- Can Breakfast Make a Difference in Your Academic Performance?

THE BOTTOM LINE

Get Your Cholesterol Level Checked for Free!

Come by the Student Health Center's Health Education Room on Tuesday mornings 9:30-11:00 (with your ID card in hand) and get your cholesterol level checked at no charge. Or call 346-4456 for more information.

Food and Moods

There will be several workshops this quarter relating to the topic of Food and Moods. Check with Health Education at 346-4456 for more information or LOOK INSIDE for a listing of upcoming workshops!

Staying Healthy

Drop by the Health Education Center for access to a variety of health books, or make an appointment with a Peer Health Advisor who is eager to talk with you about your concerns or problems relating to health issues. Just call 346-4456.

Don't Let the World Get the Best of You

If you are having a difficult time controlling mood swings or depression, or if you just feel frustrated and alone, remember that there are plenty of people out there who care about you and are willing to help. All it takes is a phone call. Make the decision to help yourself by reaching out to a friend, counselor, minister, or support group.

Peer Health Advising — It's Great Fun and Very Rewarding

To be a Peer Health Advisor, you must enroll in HEP 410 or 510 and apply through the Student Health Center's Health Education Program, so drop by the Health Education Room to pick up your application. In this two-quarter course, you will gain practical experience in public speaking, learn how to facilitate and implement group discussions, develop health promotion projects, and write an article for the Well Now. Call 346-4456 or 346-2728 for more information.

Food and Moods: Why do we eat?



By Jennifer Koch

Do you ever find yourself putting food into your mouth without being aware of it? Do you eat to reduce stress or anxiety? What about eating to avoid doing homework? Ever eat just out of boredom? Most people probably would answer "yes" to at least one of these questions. Whatever happened to eating to satisfy hunger? It appears that eating is a very psychological practice.

There are many psychological reasons why people eat. Some people eat for comfort. In a college environment, as a student, you may feel anonymous, lost, stressed, and like just another face in the crowd, so you turn to food. Food can be an easy alternative to love and security.

Anxiety can be another factor contributing to mass food consumption. It is easy to find yourself loading up on junk food to study for an exam. You may need extra energy and can fall into the trap of thinking that food will soothe your mind.

Habit is another factor which influences eating. When you eat at noon or when you get home at the end of the day, regardless of whether

you are hungry, you are guilty of habitual eating.

Most people would reason that they choose particular foods to eat because they like them. However, there are numerous factors involved in our choice of foods.

Three main factors that influence eating include:

1. *Consequences After Eating*—which include a change in preference for a food as a result of that food making a person ill in the past or changes in preference for food because in the past it has removed a nutritional deficiency in that person. For example, an anemic person might crave meat, beans, or spinach because they contain a great deal of iron.

2. *Scientific Findings*—this type of information about foods causing high blood pressure or reducing the chances of cancer causes people to opt for a healthier food choice.

3. *Environmental Factors*—cost, availability and convenience of certain foods might deter us from one item, while attracting us to others.

Even though on the surface it might appear that people eat foods only because they like them, actually, people make many considerations before they make food choices. They

ponder whether the food will make them feel sick or bloated. They "listen to their bodies," in the sense that they realize that their body is craving something that it really needs and try to fulfill that deficiency.

Cost, availability and convenience have a tremendous influence on food choice. For example, we know that green vegetables and carbohydrates are a healthier lunch than a sweet roll and coffee; however, the nearest salad bar is a mile away and costs \$4.50. If you have 15 minutes until your next class and \$1.25 in your pocket, you are going to be tempted to opt for the sweet roll and coffee.

If you think about the situation, you may realize that a healthier alternative would be a bagel and a cup of tea, which would be equal in price and just as accessible as the sweet roll and coffee.

The salad bar might have been exactly what you wanted, but with a busy college schedule and a small college budget, it was not a feasible option. Nonetheless, don't throw caution to the wind and don't think that there aren't any alternatives when you are in this type of situation.

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Eating habits influenced by stress



By Neil Boyce

What follows is a "diet" that some college students may follow from time to time, especially when they have papers, projects, midterms and finals.

Breakfast

1/2 grapefruit
1 slice whole wheat toast
8 oz. skim milk

Lunch

4 oz. lean broiled chicken breast
1 cup zucchini — steamed
1 Oreo cookie

Mid-afternoon Snack

Rest of the package of Oreos
1 quart chocolate chip cookie dough ice cream

Dinner

2 loaves garlic bread
Large pepperoni and olive pizza
Large pitcher of Henry's
3 Snickers candy bars
Entire frozen cheesecake eaten directly from the freezer

Unfortunately, when stress-filled days confront us each quarter, we may turn to this type of destructive diet.

We tend to eat much more healthily when we are less stressed. As the day progresses and becomes more stressful, the worse our eating habits become.

There are many links between nutrition and stress. The TATT feeling (Tired All the Time) so often expressed by students, executives, housewives, and laborers alike sometimes is the result of skipping meals, undereating, and eating low or quick-energy foods in the pressure of daily life. Inconsistent and irregular eating habits, so often exuded by students, are a leading nutritional problem for many people in our society as well.

Another issue with a person's irregular eating patterns, when she/he is stressed, is that inadequate vitamins and minerals may contribute to loss of energy, irritability, insomnia, and anxiety.

This is not to say that a person whose eating patterns change when she/he is stressed should take vitamin supplements, but rather should strive for a well-balanced diet that can provide for the body's daily needs—energy, vitamins and minerals.

Many times when we are stressed, we tend to eat those foods that give us a quick jolt or burst of energy—usually something containing lots of refined sugar. Yet, in the end, this is antithetical to what we desire from these foods—lots of energy.

High amounts of refined sugar—

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Alcohol: Hindrance or help?



By Twila Cain

We all know that many Americans are addicted to a drug called alcohol.

Alcohol is a factor in a third to half of all homicides, motor vehicle fatalities, child and spouse abuse cases and a number of other serious problems.

Heavy drinkers usually suffer from malnutrition as well as some other detrimental afflictions. Some of these include inflammation of the pancreas, cirrhosis of the liver, and cancer of the mouth, voice box, esophagus and liver or breast. Abuse of alcohol can also cause heart muscles to become corroded and can cause high blood pressure.

So are there any benefits for those who do drink? New studies say yes, but only if we drink in moderation.

"There is no other drug that is so efficient (at preventing heart attacks) as moderate intake of alcohol," says Serge Renaud, director of the French National Institute for Health and Medical Research.

Is this true? Are we less likely to have heart disease if we drink alcohol? Probably, but do the other costs outweigh this benefit?

Alcohol is associated with lower rates of heart disease, because as you take in alcohol your high-density lipoproteins (HDLs) go up. HDLs are "good" cholesterol; they appear to protect against heart disease by providing good circulatory health. Medical research shows that the HDL level of drinkers is 10-15% higher than non-drinkers. Some researchers believe that alcohol also inhibits "platelet aggregation," which means the blood will be less likely to form clots.

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