

# Health Education Program

# WELL NOW

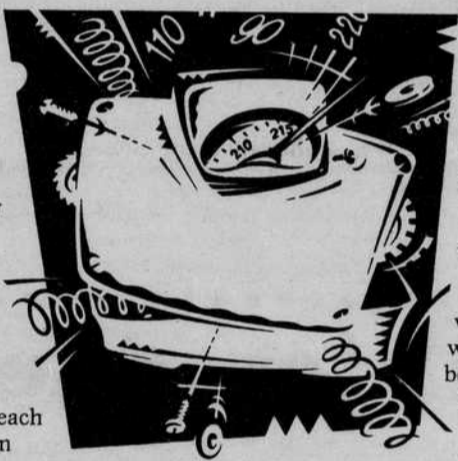
## Avoid Those Dieting Blues

By Heidi Krier

Now that spring break has ended, many of us are coming back to school with a tan and a tired body. Why so tired after a week of relaxation? The cause could be some "post-party blues" or the lingering effects of a pre-spring break diet. Your friends tell you how great you look, especially with the radiating glow from your new tan. The problem is you don't feel beautiful despite all your efforts to look great.

These days, we get a lot of mixed messages about health and beauty. The media portrays women as healthy if they are thin and have a "healthy glow" to them, yet we all know the damage sun can have on our skin. But did you know that it is healthier to be overweight than underweight? Research indicates that is actually healthier to be 30% overweight than 30% underweight.

Many of today's popular dieting techniques, such as chronic diets, yo-yo diets and crash diets are very dangerous to the body and can lead to a number of physiological and psychological effects. For example, dieting can lead to increased risk of heart disease, restriction of brainpower, thinning hair and loss of coordination. The dieting industry claims these diets give you the healthy body you have always dreamed. Their tactic seems to be working because an estimated \$33 billion dollars each year is spent in the U.S. on



gimmicks that just don't work.

### Dieting Myths Versus Dieting Facts

Dieting actually does the opposite of what you want your body to do. Going on a calorie restricted diet slows down your metabolism and sets the body into a starvation mode. When this happens, the body tends to store incoming calories as fat and may even use your muscle as an energy source. Furthermore, people can not sustain the low restriction of calories for long periods of time and either gain the weight back or are in danger of developing an eating disorder. According to E.D.A.P. (eating disorders awareness and prevention), 95% of people on these types of diets gain the weight back, most within one to five years. Diets can also rob us of energy and restrict our brain power — two things that are essential in being a successful college student! Diets that restrict eating of whole food groups (i.e. the protein diet) can also harm the body.

These diets lack the nutrients and carbohydrates that are the main ingredients needed for our body to produce energy.

### How can YOU stay healthy?

Many of you may be asking whether there is any way to lose unwanted pounds or to keep the weight off in a healthy way. Well, there are a number of ways to keep your body at healthy weight for you, which may be above the standard you or the

media has set. There are some healthy alternatives to the ill-fated world of diet fads, and they could be helpful in achieving your goals. It is important to remember we are all destined to be different sizes, however. Just because you are larger than someone else does not mean you are less healthy than they are.

### Healthy tips for weight loss and maintenance

- Learn to love your body and set reasonable goals.
- Choose food from all food groups (if vegetarian follow vegetarian food guide pyramid) that provides adequate calcium, iron and protein.
- Diets that balance calories in with energy expended are easier to stick with and maintain long term.
- Moderation is the key to any healthy lifestyle. Any food is okay as long as it is eaten in moderation. Exercise should also be in moderation as well; overdoing it can cause burnout or injury.
- Don't skip meals. Your body needs a steady supply of energy and skipping meals can cause you to overeat later.
- Exercise regularly-let your body be your guide. Start out slow and ease into a workout regimen. You should feel good after you have worked out and you should feel the benefits in more than just weight loss.
- Try not to lose more than one to two pounds a week.
- For information on what is a healthy weight for you, talk with a nutritionist to help you stay on track. The University of Oregon's nutritionist, Kristen Olmos, can help you create a regimen that is good for you. Contact her at 346-2794.

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#### Alcohol: A Stress Reliever?

Think drinking alcohol will help reduce stress? Guess again. Find out about more effective ways of managing stress.

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**Hey There, Sleepy Head!** Need some help getting a good night sleep? We've got some tips that will help you snooze.

#### Fuel Up

Before you hit the gym for a workout, be sure to give your body the fuel it needs. Learn more about how carbohydrates can give you the energy you need to maximize your workouts.

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**Boost Your Performance** Thinking about using diet supplements to enhance performance? Before you start, you should learn about the risks.

#### The Lowdown on Gettin' High

Are more people smoking pot at the U of O? Or, are more people just getting caught? And, is pot smoking as harmless as most people think? You decide.

## Stressing Out Over Alcohol

By Jennifer Youngblood

You have an 8-page paper due next week that you haven't even started. Your roommate is driving you absolutely crazy. Your parents are perpetually bugging you about last quarter's grades and how you should study more. And to top it all off, your boyfriend (or girlfriend, whichever the case may be) said you're too moody lately and decided to give you some space to work things out on your own.

So many things are piling up on top of you and you're beginning to feel like you've lost your sanity. So, what do you decide to do? Well, that's simple. You do what you think everybody else does — go to your favorite bar or stay home with your drink of choice and make all your problems go away.

It may not be a new solution to your problems, but it seems to work for all your friends, so why not? Of course you're going to forget about your stress-filled life for awhile, but as soon as you get

over that hangover from your "solution," you'll remember all your problems because, surprise!, they're still there!

In reality, alcohol isn't a very good stress reliever because it acts as a depressant and elevates the stress levels in your body. This means that it depresses the central nervous system, giving you the sense of being more relaxed (which is why you went out in the first place, right?).

But, after it's done making you feel semi-relaxed, it will then make you feel more depressed (which is something you didn't want!).

This nervous system depression causes a stress

response and adds one more thing to your already long list of stressors. Unless these stressors are taken care of appropriately, they can have serious effects on your health and lead to even more stress!

Interestingly, seeing college students using alcohol as a stress reliever may not seem too unfamiliar at the University of Oregon. According to the 1998 University Health Center Survey, 14.2% of our student population report that they drink 3-4 days per week. But the same survey also shows that 71.1% of students han-

dle stress "excellently" or "well." The point is that even

though it may seem like a popular stress management technique for a lot of students, not everybody drinks it up when things get too stressful. There are other ways!

Instead of using alcohol to manage the stress in your life, try some new approaches. Go for a quick walk, ride your bike, talk with a friend, go to the mall, rollerblade through the park, work out at the rec center, read a good book, do breathing exercises, join a yoga class — The list goes on and on, and you can add numerous personal touches to it.

Be original! Be creative! Do something that is going to make you feel better, rather than tipping back the bottle and causing yourself some more unwanted stress.

But if you feel like nothing can possibly help you, go to the Counseling Center located at the University Health Center (or you can call 346-3227 or 346-4488 after hours) and talk with a counselor, free of charge.



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