

Freshman year – without the fifteen



In terms of nutritious eating, consumption of Kraft Dinner every day is not such a good plan.

Doug Estey / The Brunswickan

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THE BRUNSWICKAN

As if there isn't enough for first-year students to think about with moving, making friends, and starting classes, they are faced with the added worry of the formidable foe of the freshman fifteen.

Fear of those extra pounds looms up as school gets closer. Leaving their spot at the family dinner table, fresh-faced young people are free to replace their meat and potatoes with whatever they like. Pizza and beer becomes the staple meal for many.

On top of this, students can often be otherwise occupied, whether with studying or other pastimes. Time spent at the gym can become a thing of the past.

Weight gain is so closely associated with beginning university life that it often seems unavoidable. Although those extra pounds

most certainly will pounce onto the bodies of those who become too lax, they are very easy to dodge with a bit of education.

Saint John-based nutritionist Deborah Ferguson has had three children leave the nest and embark on a new life at university.

When asked her opinion on how to eat at meal hall, Ferguson replies, "drink water. Unaltered, pure water. No soft drinks."

As far as solids, Ferguson recommends grabbing fruits and healthy muffins such as bran. Yogurt, cheese, and granola are also at the top of her list for nutrition on the go. At meals, she says to make sure that there is protein present at breakfast, lunch, and dinner.

"If you say to people, 'where do you get your protein?' they have no idea. But it's brain food," says Ferguson.

Meats such as chicken and fish are high in protein; eggs, chickpeas and nuts can be alternatives. Protein boosts cognitive function

and keeps energy levels high, she explains, which is why she suggests 60 grams per day for young women and 80-90 grams per day for men.

Ferguson cites color-rich vegetables as the healthiest companion to protein. The brighter in color a vegetable is, the higher it is in antioxidants and phytonutrients.

"Nutrition comes from color," says Ferguson.

The nutritionist's number one meal hall no-no? Dessert.

"Even if a person is not accustomed to eating dessert, it's there every night."

The key is simply avoiding the temptation.

"Have treats," Ferguson says, "but don't make them a prominent part of your diet."

Martin Bayliss, General Manager of Sodexo at UNB, reiterates what Ferguson had to say about dessert.

"That's always a challenge – not to overdo it on the dessert front," he says.

When asked for tips on nutritious eating at meal hall, Bayliss mentioned the salad bar as a major plus. Although not all dressings offered are low calorie, there are healthy options available. Also, veggie entrees are always available, which is good to keep in mind even if you're a carnivore.

Bayliss also notes that all cooking oils used in the dining hall are now trans fat free.

"Nutrition and health are really coming to the forefront for everybody," he says. "We're trying to improve our menu so that students don't have to think about it as much."

Another step Sodexo has made in this direction, says Bayliss, is increasing their use of whole wheat pasta, since pasta is a commonly served item.

"My goal this year is to have whole wheat pasta available 50% of the time," he says.

One issue that can throw off students is the flavor of foods served at meal halls. Striking a

happy medium with spices is a challenge due to a wide variety of preferences from students, so the recipes tend to be kept simple.

One option to overcome boredom with flavors would be to simply bring one's own spices, sauce, or dressing to add some pizzazz to a meal that has been toned down to suit the masses. A little creativity goes a long way with food.

Bayliss explains that "it's not hard to come to the dining hall and eat healthy if you just take a little time to educate yourself."

Although first-year students can be the most challenged by nutrition due to their lack of experience in making their own meals, returning students and those living off campus face the same issues. Deborah Ferguson gives advice on how to eat well on a limited budget.

"Read ingredients," she says, "don't buy a lot of boxed, processed foods. Many of them have a shelf life that would outlive you."

"Buy in bulk," she advises.

"Avoid buying white pasta and breads, as they are high in carbs and low in nutritional value."

Foods such as these are a sure recipe for weight gain, she explains. Ferguson suggests buying whole wheat and whole grain products instead. She suggests large quantities of oatmeal as well, which can be frozen and helps form the basis of a good diet.

Fruits, veggies, meat, chicken and fish are all highly recommended.

"The keep-it-simple principle works well when you eat," says Ferguson. Again, she stresses the importance of protein and color-rich vegetables, as well as fresh fruit and nuts which can be carried around in a backpack. Like most areas of life, balance is the key when it comes to nutrition and maintaining a healthy diet.

Other easy but healthy options include wraps with nut butter, cottage cheese with fruit, chicken sandwiches or wraps, and canned fish. "Now that's a brain food!" says Ferguson.



Work-Study

STUDENT INFORMATION

Work-Study is a subsidized work program designed to assist financially needy students with the high costs associated with post-secondary study. The program will also provide students with an opportunity to gain valuable skills/experience in an on-campus part-time employment situation.

Work-study positions are 10 hours per week, \$10.00 per hour.

Due to the number of limited available positions, program eligibility will not guarantee employment.

ELIGIBILITY

Eligibility is restricted to full-time UNB *undergraduate and graduate* students with *demonstrated* financial need. Students must also be in good academic standing (*GPA of 2.0 and over from the most recent assessment year*) to be eligible for program consideration.

PROCEDURES AND IMPLEMENTATION

- Step 1: CONTACT the UNB Financial Aid Office at 453-4796 between September 2nd – September 18th, 2008, to set up an appointment for a "Financial Assessment" to determine program eligibility. Once program eligibility has been determined, the Financial Aid Office will forward your name to the Student Employment Service.
- Step 2: VIEW the available positions from September 2nd – September 19th, 2008, at Student Employment Services (SES) located in the Neville Homestead or by accessing the SES web site: www.unb.ca/employment.
- Step 3: SUBMIT up to a maximum of eight resumes and covering letter *no later than September 19th, 2008 (4:00pm)* to Student Employment Service (Neville Homestead).
- Step 4: HIRING DEPARTMENT will contact those selected for an interview.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

Financial Aid Office
Alumni Memorial Building
Telephone 453-4796

OR

Student Employment Service
Neville Homestead
Telephone 453-4620

**DEADLINE - for "Financial Assessment" is
THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 18th, 2008**