

# KEYS TO BETTER HEALTH™

## Beat The Bulge: The Freshman 15

Heading off to college for the first time is fun and exciting, but it can also bring a new set of challenges. With endless buffets at dining halls, late night pizza deliveries, and more independence with food choices, it's not unusual for students to gain weight during the first year of college. The following tips can help you avoid gaining the "Freshman 15" while enjoying your new experiences.

### Stock your fridge

- Many residence halls allow a mini-fridge in the dorm room. Stock your fridge with healthy items such as fruits, vegetables, and low-fat dairy products.

### Plan ahead

- Avoid binge-eating by preventing yourself from getting over-hungry. Eating every few hours can help you maintain a healthy weight, and it may also boost your energy levels.
- Plan ahead and keep snacks in your back pack. Make your own trail mix with nuts, plain popcorn, and dried fruits. Portion out the trail mix in small zip bags for easy snacks on the go.



### Preview and prepare

- The first few times you visit the dining hall, take a walk around and make note of what is offered. Identify items you like, and then go back through with your plate or tray and select only these items, keeping proper portion sizes in mind. You'll be less likely to grab extra items that add unneeded calories.
- When selecting a beverage, consider low-fat milk, unsweetened tea and coffee, or plain water. It is easy to consume excess calories with hidden sugar in beverages.

### Focus on positives

- Avoid going on fad or crash diets, and focus on what you should eat. Dietary Guidelines for Americans notes that we should eat more fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean meats. Small changes add up: consider filling half your plate with fruits and vegetables.
- Be active in ways you enjoy. Get involved on campus at the recreation center and find a friend to join you. Activity will help you maintain a healthy weight, and may also help your mood and energy level.

**Keys to Better Health™** offers a nutrition shelf-edge labeling program, which makes it easy for you to quickly identify healthy choices regardless of what diet you follow. When you're in our store, be on the lookout for our nutrition tags

### Resources:

1. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. Office of Disease Prevention and Health Promotion website. <https://health.gov/dietaryguidelines/2015/guidelines/>. Updated 4/11/17. Accessed 4/11/17.

