

Self-Care: Nutrition



and Academic Success

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**Nutritious food is fuel for our brain**

Nutritious food (vegetables, fruits, proteins) is necessary to keep us going throughout the day. In addition, we need stamina to do our school activities, work, and (believe it or not) go out with friends.

In an article called "Exercise and Nutrition for College Students," Maryville University stated, "College students may find it all too easy to push exercise and nutrition to the bottom of their priorities. However, [opting for health rather than comfort](http://www.mentalhealthamerica.net/eat-well) can not only help improve student well-being but can also help to improve their academic performance."

Do you have breakfast (for many the most important meal of the day) before heading out to class (face to face or online)?

Do you have three meals per day (breakfast, lunch, and dinner)?

Do you have time for at least one sit-down relaxing meal away from distractions?

Do you plan your weekly meals and grocery shop accordingly? When eating, does your plate look balanced (protein, grains, fruits, and vegetables)?

Do you feel energized after your meals?

Do you keep yourself well hydrated by drinking water throughout the day?

## A few questions in need of honest answers.

**If you answered NO to any of them, it is expected but not OK.**



**TAKE A LOOK...**



# Nutrition and Academic Performance

**“WE ARE WHAT WE EAT”**



This phrase is traced back to Anthelme Brillat-Savarin in 1826 in his book The Physiology of Taste. He wrote, “Tell me what you eat, and I will tell you what you are.”

This line in books, movies, and social media seems to bear some truth.

Student participation in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) School Breakfast Program (SBP) is associated with increased academic grades and standardized test scores, reduced absenteeism, and improved cognitive performance (e.g., memory).

## According to the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and Prevention

**BREAKFAST**



Skipping breakfast is associated with students' decreased cognitive performance (e.g., alertness, attention, memory, processing of complex visual display, and problem-solving).

**FRUITS AND VEGGIES**

Lack of adequate consumption of specific foods, such as fruits, vegetables, or dairy products, is associated with lower grades among students.

**NUTRIENTS**

Deficits of specific nutrients (i.e., vitamins A, B6, B12, C, folate, iron, zinc, and calcium) are

associated with lower grades and higher rates of absenteeism and tardiness among students

**Watch this informative video**



[**How the food you eat affects your brain - Mia Nacamulli**](https://youtu.be/xyQY8a-ng6g?si=j3XvkIUjVZiNwLhg)



# What to do?

**E A S I E R S A I D T H A N D O N E ?**

How about a meal plan...try it!

[**https://jeanetteshealthyliving.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Easy-College-Weekly-Meal-Planner.pdf**](https://jeanetteshealthyliving.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/Easy-College-Weekly-Meal-Planner.pdf)





**TIPS AND IDEAS**

**PORTION -** Learn proper portion size. Keep track of how much you eat to avoid overeating, even the healthiest foods.

**EAT BREAKFAST** - Start your day with a balanced, healthy meal.

**SNACKS**- Keep dry nuts and fruits handy for a quick boost.

**AVOID SUGARY DRINKS** - Replace that with plain water



**FRUITS AND VEGGIES** - Try to eat fruits and veggies. Incorporate at least two every day.

**DON'T SKIP MEALS** - Pack up foods you can eat on the run. **DRINK WATER** - Drinking enough water can help boost your concentration and prevent overeating.

**INDULGE** - A little treat now and then is a great way to reward yourself for eating a healthy diet.

**TAKE VITAMINS** - If you feel like you aren't getting the nutrition you need from your diet.

## Todays choices will impact your future

Your parents and school made your dietary choices in the past; now, as a young adult, the CHOICE IS YOURS. Establishing good eating habits during college years is critical because these behaviors often continue through adulthood

and can be very difficult to change once established.

O. Brown et al. stated, “overweight college students are more likely to become overweight adults and are at a higher risk for diet-related chronic diseases such

as cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, and hypertension”.



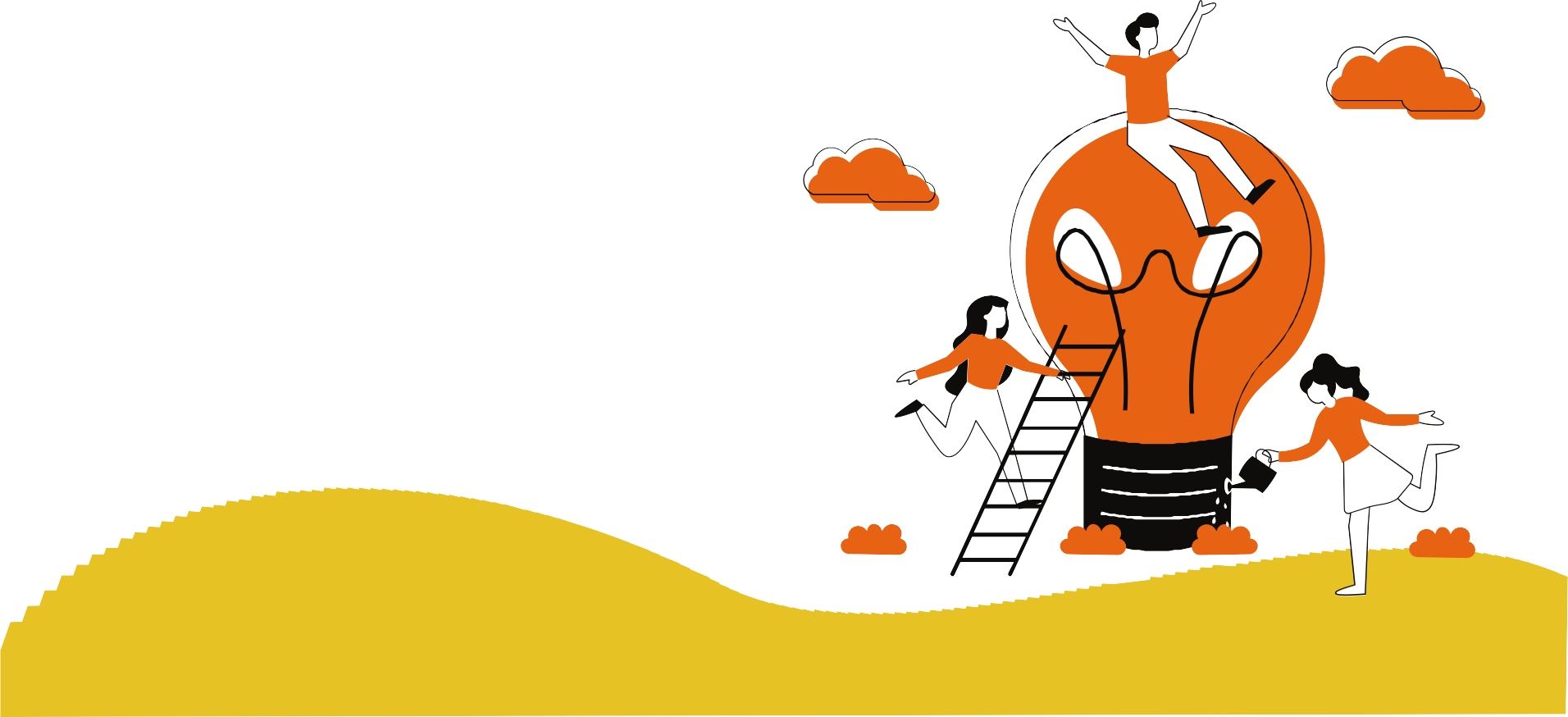
## SOURCES

[Staying Healthy in College | Student Wellness Tips | Maryville University](https://online.maryville.edu/blog/exercise-and-nutrition-for-college-students/#%3A~%3Atext%3DOverall%2C%20good%20nutrition%20is%20a%20great%20tool%20to%2Cawake%20when%20they%20need%20to%20go%20to%20sleep) [Nutrition | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/index.html)

[Benefits of School Breakfast - Food Research & Action Center (frac.org)](https://frac.org/programs/school-breakfast-program/benefits-school-breakfast)

Brown O, O’Connor L, Savaiano D. Mobile MyPlate: A pilot study using text messaging to provide nutrition education and promote better dietary choices in college students. J Am Coll Health. 2017; 62:320-27





**Time to reflect and discuss among your peers**