Our bodies are being run down daily from our busy days and the stresses of life. In between one thing and another, we eat when we can, and we all know that we should strive to make healthy choices when it comes to the foods we eat. But this can be harder than it may seem.

Genetics and our diet have a great influence on how our bodies work. We have control of only half, while Mother Nature does the rest. To give ourselves the best chance we can, it’s important to make sure we are getting all the nutrients we need in our diets. This includes antioxidants. It’s important to note that antioxidants are more than just an additive or natural ingredient in a food product.

Antioxidants are used to help repair the damaged or used compounds in our bodies, by neutralizing them. For example, this means that when we drink alcohol or use/are exposed to other external factors like drugs, smoking, or even UV radiation; radicals (compounds) are destroyed by the Antioxidants in our bodies. Antioxidants repair and contribute to the reconstruction of these radicals tormenting our bodies. This fights aging, illness, heart disease and cancer. But where can we find these powerful and helpful antioxidants? There are a few places where we can find antioxidants abundance. Vitamin C is loaded with antioxidants. Pat Kendall, Ph.D., R.D., Food Science and Human Nutrition Specialist offers a healthy supply of citrus fruits, green peppers, broccoli, green leafy vegetables, strawberries, raw cabbage and potatoes for antioxidants. Kendall claims that it is important to get daily doses due to its water solubility. Another place to find antioxidants is in foods containing Vitamin E. Due to it’s fat solubility, it provides long term healthy effects on our bodies. Vitamin E is found in such foods as wheat germ, nuts, seeds, whole grains, green leafy vegetables, vegetable oil and fish-liver oil (Kendall).

Beta-carotene is not only rich in vitamin A, but it is another powerful source of antioxidants to protect our bodies from the damaging free radicals we are exposed to daily. The richest sources of beta-carotene are yellow, orange and green leafy fruits and vegetables. These include: carrots, squash, broccoli, sweet potatoes, tomatoes, kale, collards, cantaloupe, peaches, and apricots.

Lastly, selenium offers something most other minerals cannot. It helps repair all of the tarnished compounds in the body, notoriously cancer. Dr. Kendall researched that, "It is best to get selenium through foods, as large doses of it in the supplement form can be toxic." This includes but is not limited to: fish, shellfish, red meat, grains, eggs, chicken and garlic.

Fighting the daily external battles can be aided by a few helpings of antioxidants. Make sure to mix it up and vary what you chose to eat and when you eat it. Too much of one thing may not always be the best. Be sure to spread it out and get in as much of each vitamin mineral in healthy doses. A healthy intake of antioxidants can do more for your body and be more preventative than you can ever imagine.

For more information, check out http://www.ext.colostate.edu/index.html

A few great examples of common foods that are loaded with antioxidants are:
1) Wild Blueberries
2) Dried Red Kidney beans
3) Pinto Beans
The Alcoholic College Life: Beware!

Are you prepared for the consequences of excessive and underage drinking? Whether you choose to drink or not, the problematic effects of alcohol consumption in college could put you and your friends and family at serious risk!

Here are some facts according to questionnaire-based self-reports about college drinking:

- **Death:** 1,700 college students between the ages of 18 and 24 die each year from alcohol-related unintentional injuries, including motor vehicle crashes.
- **Injury:** 599,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are unintentionally injured under the influence of alcohol.
- **Assault:** More than 696,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are assaulted by another student who has been drinking.
- **Sexual Abuse:** More than 97,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are victims of alcohol-related sexual assault or date rape.
- **Unsafe Sex:** 400,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 had unprotected sex and more than 100,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 report having been too intoxicated to know if they consented to having sex.
- **Academic Problems:** In 2002, about 25 percent of college students reported academic consequences of their drinking including missing class, falling behind, doing poorly on exams or papers, and receiving lower grades overall.
- **Health Problems/Suicide Attempts:** In 2002, more than 150,000 students developed an alcohol-related health problem and between 1.2 and 1.5 percent of students indicated that they tried to commit suicide within the past year due to drinking or drug use.
- **Drunk Driving:** 2.1 million students between the ages of 18 and 24 drove under the influence of alcohol in 2002.
- **Vandalism:** About 11 percent of college student drinkers report that they have damaged property while under the influence of alcohol.
- **Police Involvement:** About 5 percent of 4-year college students are involved with the police or campus security as a result of their drinking and an estimated 110,000 students between the ages of 18 and 24 are arrested for an alcohol-related violation such as public drunkenness or driving under the influence.
- **Alcohol Abuse and Dependence:** 31 percent of college students met criteria for a diagnosis of alcohol abuse and 6 percent for a diagnosis of alcohol dependence in the past 12 months.

* The statistics above were provided by: www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov and represent the year 2005 unless otherwise stated.

But I Thought Coffee Was Bad For You !?!!?

Everyday, millions of people around the world drink the most popular energy booster, coffee. A mild stimulant, coffee increases the activity of the central nervous system and helps one to stay alert and it also increases mental focus. Many people feel that the extra energy is very useful in the stress and long hours that they have to deal with in a typical day. In most young adults, the stimulant effect of coffee peaks in about one hour and then declines as the liver breaks down the caffeine. Not only does coffee do an excellent job of increasing the energy level for a temporary amount of time, but new studies show that drinking coffee may actually decrease a person’s chance of attaining potentially fatal diseases. Some negative conditions with coffee drinkers are that coffee is known to make people feel jittery and may slightly increase the chance of raising cholesterol levels. This is why many experts stress that drinking coffee in moderation will help keep the coffee drinker healthy. According to ABC News, some tests found that coffee is the number one source of antioxidants used in America. Antioxidants are very important compounds that protect a person’s body from disease. That is why scientists say that drinking coffee in moderation can help fight disease, including cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and stroke.

Particularly in college, now more than ever with the increase in coffee shops and the growth of the industry, students are habituated to have their usual “after dinner” or morning coffee to stay alert and awake in order to finish their school work. Employees feel that they are not as productive at work without their cup of java in the AM. Since coffee is not necessarily bad for a person’s body, drinking in moderation (Most sources state that 2-3 cups of coffee a day, 16-24 ounces, is considered moderate consumption. But we think it should be more like 1-2 cups.) is the best way to achieve its full effects. It is very important to note that the best alternative to drinking coffee is exercise. A quick walk and some fresh air may be far more effective than a cup of coffee.

For more information check out: http://www.cosic.org/questions-and-answers

Knowledge of Cholesterol Numbers—Give Yourself Some TLC

September is National Cholesterol Education Month. This year’s focus is on helping Americans with high blood cholesterol become aware of their need to make therapeutic lifestyle changes (TLC) that will help lower their cholesterol and their risk for heart disease.

There are several simple steps that will help reduce one’s risk for heart disease: 1) Find out what your total cholesterol numbers are by getting a fasting lipoprotein profile. These cholesterol numbers will include your LDL (bad) cholesterol, your HDL (good) cholesterol, and your triglyceride numbers; 2) Calculate your risk for heart disease. To do this you can use the ATP III assessment tool that the National Cholesterol Education Program offers online; 3) Discuss your specific risk for heart disease with a health care provider and take the steps necessary to reduce the risk factors that are putting you in danger; 4) Learn how to read a food label and begin choosing foods that are low in saturated fat, trans fat, and cholesterol; 5) Use a body mass calculator to calculate your body mass index (BMI), so you are aware of how your weight measures up; 6) Participate in physical activity of moderate intensity for at least thirty minutes a day. This thirty minute period can be broken up throughout the day if you are having difficulty finding time to accomplish this task; 7) Do not smoke.

If all of these simple steps are followed, one’s personal risk for heart disease will definitely be reduced.

To learn more about cholesterol and reducing the risk for heart disease visit http://hp2010.nhlbihin.net/cholmonth

Alcoholism and it’s "Ripple Effect” On Life

As college students and adults, we should already be aware of the effects of alcohol on the body. However, alcohol does not just affect the body. It affects the people around you and your day-to-day life. Addiction to alcohol occurs by drinking steadily and frequently over time. Your body becomes dependent upon it because it affects the blood flow, the nervous system and neurons in the brain, until your body believes it cannot function without it. Alcohol causes a release of chemicals in the brain, dopamine and serotonin, that make you feel "happy". Over time, alcohol use actually depletes the stores of these chemicals, and it becomes impossible for drinking to restore mood.

So why do alcoholics have such a hard time staying sober if it eventually leads to unhappiness? It is determined to be a part of three factors: mental and emotional stress, codependency, and social and culture pressures. Alcoholics turn to alcohol when they are under any sort of stress, and it is their "codependent"- their best friend. As for cultural pressures, the media is constantly portraying alcohol as a pleasurable experience. The media highlights the benefits of light drinking to your health, but forgets to mention that frequent light drinking leads to heavier drinking and the affects that it has.

Alcoholism starts a severe "ripple effect" on everyone within a society. Alcohol is involved in over half of all automobile fatalities. It increases the risk of injury daily too; one drink doubles your chances of harming yourself. Alcoholism is found to be the primary cause in a quarter of all suicides and implicated in more than 60 percent of all murders. Does that drink still sound appealing? Well, alcoholism affects the home life too. It increases the chances of domestic violence. Children with alcoholic parents due worse in schools, have a high tendency to suffer from depression, anxiety, and stress, and have a low-self esteem. They also have a high tendency to be alcoholics themselves, and have serious life-long coping problems.

Alcohol's effects on the body are devastating as well. Liver disorders - such as cirrhosis, hepatitis, viral hepatitis B and C, and liver cancer - are all caused by alcoholism. Without proper treatment, these are fatal. Alcohol also affects the gastrointestinal tract, making it prone to chronic inflammation, tears, and ulcers. Alcohol affects your cardiovascular system as well. It increases blood pressure, the risk of stroke, the risk of hemorrhaging, and can cause an irregular heartbeat. Most recently, heavy alcohol consumption has links to cancer in the head, pancreas, stomach, esophagus, and liver. Alcoholism also causes impotency in men and infertility in women. Alcoholism has these devastating affects on the body, on top of those affects on the mental level.

Thankfully, there are many options out there to help alcoholics fight this disease. On campus there are many residential facilities where you have others with the same problem as you, counselors, and structured plans for family support. These support systems are very important in the fight against this disease. For some people the only way to kick the habit is with prescription drug treatments, but the alcoholic must already be on the road to recovery because these drugs can be addictive as well. Also, there are aftercare programs - such as Alcoholics Anonymous - that help with the lifestyle adjustment and staying sober long after treatment. With all of the support and knowledge about alcoholism that is available to us, we need to take advantage of it. Excessive drinking leads to violence and health problems that can be stopped. If anyone you know might have a problem, there are hotlines and aid centers that can help.

For more information check out these helpful websites:
http://www.aca-usa.org/alcoholism.htm
http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/alcoholism/D800340/DSECTION=8
http://www.reutershealth.com/wellconnected/doc86.html
Smarter Food Choices On The Run

When it comes to our jam-packed schedules, the last thing we have on our mind is to sit down and make ourselves a nice gourmet meal or snack. Most of us end up throwing something together while hardly ever realizing the nutritional value of what we are tossing in our mouths. Grabbing a candy bar here, or a diet soda there, may seem like a quick and easy way to stay on the move without destroying your body, but can this simple oversight cause more harm than we think? It takes little time and effort to curate the nasty craving and make smarter choices when it comes to your body's daily fuel. You just have to force yourself to become conscious of it.

First, we need to be able to realize that our body is a working machine that constantly needs the acceptable amount of food and water to keep it running at the efficient rate it does. This includes making sure to eat three square meals a day. As stated earlier, with our crazy schedules, that may not be as easy as it sounds. Because of this, we end up turning to snacks to fill the void and keep our stomachs full. Grabbing that Snickers will only kick your energy up temporarily before it plummeted and leaves you more tired than you were before consumption. Sticking to a protein rich and carbohydrate infused option is your best bet. Fruit, yogurt or an apple with peanut butter is recommended by Tara Geise, MS, RD, a spokeswoman for the American Dietetic Association. This will keep you full and energized for hours.

Besides snacks, meals are very important. But it is not necessarily all you need. Stuffing yourself silly at Griesedieck to hold you for the rest of the day is a horrible idea. Eating about every 3 to 4 hours will keep you moving and your blood sugar at a steady state. According to Kathy McManus, MS, RD, director of the Department of Nutrition at Brigham and Women’s Hospital in Boston, something that has proteins and carbs and some monounsaturated fat can be a healthy option.

Lastly, it is very important to remember to stay hydrated! Not by Gatorade or other sport hydrating drinks, but with plain and simple water! One major cause of fatigue and a drop in energy is lack of water. Geise claims, one study shows that women should be drinking 9 glasses of water a day, while men should be drinking 12. Drinking coffee depletes from energy. If you tend to drink 2 or more cups a day, it is important to throw in a few glasses of water in between. (Women, make sure to add milk or some sort of calcium to your coffee, or stick to lattes rather than straight black coffee to help aid in the fight against osteoporosis!)

All in all, it is important to make sure you are constantly being energized by simple foods that won’t put a damper on your day. Small steps will make a big difference. An apple on the run is much better than a 40 oz. cola, and a breakfast bar to go will make a huge difference than going on an empty stomach.

For more information visit: http://prevention.com/health

Jumpstart your Metabolism Today!!!

Even though summer is over, we still find ourselves looking in the mirror and trying to tell if we have gained weight - a little here, or a little there. Sometimes it seems that no matter how hard we exercise or how hard we diet, the weight does not go anywhere. Well, there are some things you can do to kick start your metabolism and help yourself lose that extra weight.

Your metabolism is how your body converts the food you consume into energy, then into calories and burns it. On average, your metabolism slows down about 2 - 4 percent every ten years. So, fewer calories are burned in the amount of time it used to take, and more are stored as fat. Inactivity and muscle loss are also contributors, since the more muscle you have the more energy it needs, and the more fat you burn. The main problem is finding out how many calories a day you need and making the calories you take in equal to the amount of calories you burn out. This can be done by measuring the amount of activity you do per day. However, you must be careful not to eat too few calories. Very low calorie dieting makes your body believe it is starving itself, and actually makes it store more fat. This can cut your metabolism down by 15 - 30 percent. If you do want to diet, a low fat, high carbohydrate diet is best with an emphasis on fruits and vegetables. An even better way to boost the metabolism is to do any cardiovascular exercise for 20 minutes or more a day. Ex: hiking, cycling, running, or aerobics. Also, they say that breakfast is the most important meal of the day and they mean it - but it is for your metabolism too. By eating breakfast, you jumpstart your metabolism in the morning, and by spacing out your meals, you keep it running all day. Another metabolism happy fact - stay away from caffeine and energy boosters. The extra stimulant will boost your metabolism for a little while, but afterwards your metabolism often drops to a lower rate than normal. There are many websites that offer a basal metabolic rate reading or calculator that will tell you how many calories you need per day. This will help you limit your intake and balance your exercise. You do not have to take drastic measures to lose weight or jumpstart your metabolism. Eating right and exercising will allow you to lose that little bit extra and take control. You'll feel better with the extra energy and you'll be happier with yourself.

Check out these websites for more information about this topic:
http://www.mothernature.com/Library/Bookshelf/Books/44/44.cfm
http://www.thefactsaboutfitness.com/research/age.htm
http://www.bodybuildingforyou.com/articles-submit/jesse-cannone/increase-metabolism.htm

“A healthy breakfast can help jumpstart your metabolism in the morning.”
October: National Breast Cancer Awareness Month

October is National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, and particularly October 15 has been designated as National Mammography Day. The purpose of National Mammography Day is to make women aware of the importance of mammography and urge those women over 40 who haven’t had a mammogram to get one.

This year, on October 15, the American College of Radiology (ACR) and its accredited facilities will offer free or discounted screening mammograms. A mammogram is done to help screen for or detect breast cancer. Many small tumors can be seen on a mammogram before they can be felt by a woman or her health professional. Breast cancer is most easily treated and cured when it is discovered in an early stage. Mammograms do not prevent breast cancer or reduce a woman’s risk of developing cancer. However, regular mammograms can reduce a woman’s risk of dying from breast cancer by detecting a tumor when it is more easily treated.

Experts have different recommendations for how often you should have a mammogram. For women who are older than 50, regular mammograms (every 1 to 2 years) are recommended. For women between the ages of 40 and 50, the benefits of mammogram are not as clear. Talk with your health professional to determine when to start and how often to have a mammogram. Most organizations recommend that women have their first mammogram at age 40. However, your health professional may recommend testing at an earlier age and more often if you have risk factors for breast cancer. Any woman with a personal or family history of breast cancer is recommended to have yearly mammograms.

This information was provided by: http://health.yahoo.com/ency/healthwise/hw214210

For more information please visit: www.cancer.org

November: National Diabetes Month

November is the national American Diabetes Month. Seven percent of the population, or 20.8 million Americans are afflicted by diabetes, and 6.2 million do not even know they have the disease. If you are lucky enough to not be afflicted by diabetes, there are some things you can do to prevent type two diabetes from ever occurring. Before people develop diabetes they often have "pre-diabetes" in which their blood-sugar levels are high, but not yet high enough to be classified as diabetes. Making changes in your diet and increasing physical activity can make all the difference. Diet and exercise is better at preventing diabetes than even medication.

Losing 5-10% of your body weight and exercising for at least a half an hour a day can reduce diabetes by 58%! Type 1 diabetes, formerly known as juvenile diabetes, is when the body makes no insulin at all. It's a very serious disease, but with treatment, diet, and exercise, those diagnosed can live long, healthy lives.

In recognition and support of the immeasurable positive effects of diet and exercise, The National Diabetes Education Program has started a "Small Steps. Big Rewards. Prevent Type Two Diabetes. " campaign. For more information on this campaign and for tips on eating healthy and maintaining exercise habits visit the American Diabetes Association website below. You will also find risk level test on the site. Protect yourself by educating yourself!

For more information visit: www.diabetes.org

Maintain Strong Bones...Eat More Calcium

On college campuses nationwide, the intake of daily nutritional elements needed are usually lacking or completely missing. One of the main food groups, dairy, is suffering as well.

Calcium is in almost all of the foods in the dairy category. The mineral calcium has a major role in building and maintaining strong bones. It also reduces the risk of osteoporosis, and protects against high blood pressure. Dairy foods are also rich in riboflavin, a B vitamin that helps convert food into energy. For a typical college student, the easiest way to boost their calcium intake is by replacing snacks or meals with calcium-rich foods. Here are some examples on how to do this: For breakfast, eat cereals with one cup of low-fat or skim milk. Instead of using milk with crunchy cereal, use yogurt. When grabbing a quick meal, choose pizza with low-fat mozzarella cheese or sandwiches with low-fat cheeses. Instead of ice cream, snack on fruit-flavored yogurt. With the morning coffee or latte, add extra milk (instead of cream).

There are many different ways to change the calcium intake with a calcium-rich diet. Try making some of these simple changes so you will not have to worry about problems in the future concerning your daily dairy intake.

Be on the lookout for some of our favorite Wellness events:

**Good Eats:** March 28, 2007 11:30am-1pm at the BSC
This program features samples from different restaurants and businesses around SLU that provide the campus with healthy alternatives for food.

**The Wellness Fair:** April 20, 2007 10:30am-2:00pm in the Quad.
This program features a large variety of informational booths covering on-campus and off-campus services. It also includes health screenings, different wellness activities, and a Sports Club Expo.

Some of the Free Services that the Wellness Lab Provides:
- Fitness Center Orientations
- Nutrition Education
- Techniques for Managing Stress
- Flexibility Assessment and Instruction
- Blood Pressure Screenings
- Health and Wellness Handouts
- Body Composition Analysis
- Health and Wellness Video Rentals
- Training Logs
And MUCH MORE!!!
Call 977-7185 for more information.

Make sure to check out some of our great Wellness Programs:

**Brown Bag Lectures:** A lunch is provided free of charge to all of the SLU community that attend these helpful lunch time lectures on different wellness topics.

**Cooking Demonstrations:** Led by interns from the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics, our cooking demonstrations will help you expand your knowledge of nutrition and create healthy dishes.

**Nutritional News:** This is a one page information sheet that gives you a couple of tidbits about nutrition, working out, and living a healthy lifestyle. It even provides you with a healthy recipe to try at home. Pick one up at the Simon Recreation Center today!

**Disclaimer**
The WellSLU is provided FREE of charge on an "AS IS" basis. The information contained herein is believed to be accurate but is not warranted and is not meant to replace the advice of your healthcare provider.