FRESHMAN 15: FACT OR MYTH?

Studies have shown that students gain an average of up to 5 pounds during the first year of college, followed by a moderate weight gain during and after college.

You are not destined to gain weight, and ultimately- you are the captain of your own ship!

So keep calm and let the following tips help you navigate through healthy eating, while keeping your weight in check.

1. **Eat your meals:** Skipping meals (especially breakfast) often leads to overeating throughout the day. Have a combination of carbohydrates and protein at breakfast to jump start your day!

2. **Stock smart snacks:** Snacks can come in handy when you don’t have time to sit down for a meal. Again, look for those that combine carbohydrates and protein to fuel you. Some examples include toasts with peanut/nut butter, carrots & hummus, Greek yogurt, fruits & hard-boiled egg.

3. **Be cafeteria-wise:** The dining hall can be overwhelming with various choices. It is a good idea to walk through the cafeteria and consider your options before filling up your plate. Use the healthy plate method to guide your portions.

4. **Drink right drinks:** Social events and alcohol consumption often go hand in hand. Try to minimize alcohol drinking to an occasional basis when possible. Instead hydrate yourself with water, milk, tea, and coffee (limit 2-3 cups per day) at most times.

5. **Manage your emotions:** Whether it is homesickness, stress, anxiety etc., all of these emotions can lead to mindless eating. Consider exercising, meditating, getting enough sleep, maintaining hobbies, or speak to a health professional to help restore your mental health.

Remember, first year of college is more than just making new friendships, but also building a healthy relationship with food that nourishes your body and soul!

Courtesy of Aramark Dietitian Francesca Chee, RD