How to Beat the Freshman 15

By April Dupont

So, you just got to college and your school’s cafeteria seems like a buffet-style wonderland, but by the end of freshmen year you’re wondering where the extra poundage came from. Fear not my friends, here are some tips on how to beat the freshman 15 and drop the extra weight.

#1 Know how to Calculate Your Daily Calorie Needs

Directions: Plug in your weight/height/age into the formula to calculate your daily calorie needs

**Woman’s Daily Calorie Needs =
655 + (4.3 x your weight in pounds) + (4.7 x your height in inches) - (4.7 x your age in years)**

**Man’s Daily Calorie Needs =
66 + (6.3 x your weight in pounds) + (12.9 x your height in inches) - (6.8 x your age in years)**

#2 Know your food

Calorie-Counting 101:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Group</th>
<th>Calories In 1 serving</th>
<th>Sizes of 1 serving</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grain</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>slice of bread, 1/2 cup cereal, 1/2 cup pasta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Starchy Vegetables</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>1/4 cup baked beans, 1/2 cup corn, small baked potato</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Starchy Vegetables</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1/2 cup cook, 1 cup raw</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Most likely, your cafeteria won’t have a nutrition facts label on every food. So how will you know how many calories you’re eating? Here are some estimates of calories in a serving:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fruit</th>
<th>60</th>
<th>1/2 cup fresh fruit, 1/4 cup of dried fruit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fat</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>1 tsp butter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

You can also use a calorie counting website like [http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools/supertracker.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools/supertracker.html) to track your diet and to find the calorie values of other foods not listed here.

**#3 Hit the Gym!**

Exercising speeds up your metabolism and your body needs more calories for energy. So if you want more food, a simple solution is exercising. Then, your body can handle a few extra calories without packing on extra fat. Different levels of intensity of physical activity require different amounts of extra calories. Here are a few activities and the amount of extra calories your body needs to do them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 HOUR OF LIGHT ACTIVITY</th>
<th>1 HOUR OF MODERATE ACTIVITY</th>
<th>1 HOUR OF VIGOROUS ACTIVITY</th>
<th>1 HOUR EXTREME ACTIVITY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>To calculate your body’s extra calorie needs</td>
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<td>To calculate your body’s extra calorie needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1.2 x your weight in pounds)</td>
<td>(2.7 x your weight in pounds)</td>
<td>(5.7 x your weight in pounds)</td>
<td>(8 x your weight in pounds)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example:**

If you weigh 130 pounds and you engage in 1 hour of light activity per a day, then you need:

$130 \times 1.2 = 156$ extra calories/ day

* Don’t forget to add this to your daily calorie needs that you can calculate using the formula in Section #1. *

**#4 To drink or not to drink...**
Increase your water intake to curb hunger. Have a glass before you start a meal to increase fullness and have at least 8 cups per day. Decrease your soda intake to drop unnecessary calories. A can of soda is 120 calories. If you have two cans of soda with dinner, and then go out drinking and have 3 cocktails, each made with a cup of coke, that’s 510 calories from drinks alone! Not to mention, the ounce of liquor in that cocktail is 64 calories. Bringing you to a grand total of **702 calories**! Beer drinkers beware; a can of regular beer is 150 calories. So, if you’ve been eating the right amounts of all the right foods, working out, and yet you can’t figure out where that belly is coming from, it may be your drinks.

### #5 Eat more salad

If your cafeteria has a salad bar, grab a salad before your meal. Salad is full of fiber and low in calories. This will fill you up without piling on the calories. **There’s a catch though—no dressing.** Salad dressing is basically fat with seasoning. It’s a big calorie punch in a small package.

**Here are some calorie values for typical salad ingredients:**

- 2 Tbsp. Italian dressing 100
- 1/4 cup croutons 50
- 1/4 cup walnuts 200
- 4 olives 25
- 1 cup romaine lettuce 25
- 1 cup broccoli 25
- 1 cup baby spinach 25
- 4 cherry tomatoes 12

Notice that salad dressing has more calories than the all of the vegetables combined. Croutons, nuts and olives are calorie-dense as well. However, nuts and olives are nutritious, so you don’t have to stop eating them, just remember to count them when calculating your calories for the day. Instead of using salad dressing for extra flavor, try using:

- Craisins
- Raisins
- Salsa
• Vinegar
• Salt/Pepper/Seasonings
• Fruits

#6 Steal some snacks
You’re cafeteria will probably allow you to grab a snack to go. Grab a banana, apple, or an orange. If your cafeteria supplies paper cups, grab a cup of yogurt with granola, a cup of cottage cheese with some grapes, a cup of dry cereal, or a peanut butter sandwich on whole wheat.
Small, healthy snacks between meals can really be your friend. Going to a buffet with your stomach on empty, will wipe out all thoughts of healthy choices. Forget that salad with no dressing and water on the side; you want that greasy cheeseburger with fries and soda. Healthy snacking will curb your cravings, so when you get to that endless buffet of deliciously unhealthy foods, you won’t be blinded by hunger.

Reference