

5 Nutritional Danger Zones for College Students

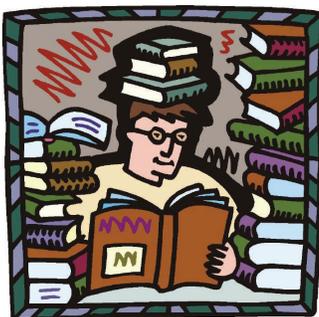
DANGER ZONES

- 1) Making the deadline
- 2) Parties and other social gatherings
- 3) Watching TV
- 4) Late night socializing

The holiday season is here! What comes along with the holidays? Only the best food and a lot of studying for finals. As you enjoy your holiday season, remember these helpful tips to stay healthy and alert to perform well on your finals and feel good through the holidays.



DANGER #1—MAKING THE DEADLINE



Pulling all nighters to study for tests or finish papers can be a dangerous situation. Why?

- It's easy to make hasty nutrition decisions when under stress
- No time to find healthy food
- Food on hand is more processed

- Students seek out foods or drinks to help them stay awake

Tips to avoid Danger #1:

- Prepare for your cram session by stocking up on healthy snacks: baby carrots, almonds, fresh grapefruit, apples, pears, rice cakes, lite popcorn

- Set aside a study time (1/2 -1 hr) then a reward activity or distraction (5-10 min.)

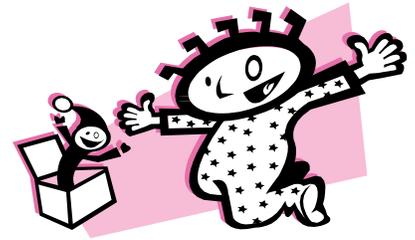
- Set an alarm and choose which snacks you will have and when
- Take intermittent breaks for the bathroom and splash warm water on your face

DANGER #2—PARTIES AND OTHER SOCIAL GATHERINGS

Parties can be a big nutritional danger zone because there are a lot of unhealthy foods available, talking and socializing can easily distract you from food monitoring, you may not be able to bring your own food options, to avoid dealing with social anxieties you might eat to look busy, or you eat to feel part of the group and fit in.

Tips to avoid Danger #3 include:

- Eat an apple or citrus fruit before you go. It will help you feel more full and help minimize the urge to over-eat.
- Add a protein or fiber to your fruit to help curb carb cravings (examples: peanut butter, low fat cheese, or hummus)
- Position yourself away from the food. Keep it out of sight, out of mind.
- Arrive at the party chewing gum. It will keep your breath fresh and your mouth busy.
- Keep a cup of water in your hands at all times



“Parties can easily distract you from food monitoring and may cause you to eat to avoid social anxieties or to feel part of a group”

DANGER #3—WATCHING TV

Watching TV is a danger zone because your mind is not actively involved leading to a desire for unnecessary snacking, eating out of boredom, and quick spurts of snacking during the commercials. Also, if others are in the room it is difficult to make a choice that is different from others in the room (ex: ordering a pizza, chips and dip, sharing a half gallon of ice cream)

Tips to avoid Danger #3:

- Drink water before you eat. We can easily confuse thirst with hunger
- Chew gum
- Reach for produce and lite popcorn for the “munchies”
- Prepare snack size baggies with only one serving so you aren’t just eating from the container.
- Keep your hands busy with puzzles, crafts, sewing projects, scrap booking, etc.

DANGER #4—LATE NIGHT SOCIALIZING

When socializing at night you enjoy bonding with your friends and aren’t thinking about what is going in your mouth. It’s probably been several hours since you’ve eaten and you are starting to get hungry again. You might be tired and eat to stay awake so you don’t miss out.

Problems come when this pattern is frequent and when your body doesn’t need the extra fuel.

Tips to avoid Danger #4:

- Remove unhealthy options from the room you are gathered in
- Drink some sparkling fruit juice water to get your sweet fix and the bubbles will help you feel full
- Use a bowl or a plate. Eating out of a carton is the way to overindulge.
- Cut up an apple into slices for a visual quantity boost.

