Healthy Eating on Campus
You Can Do It & We Can Help!

Living on a college campus poses its challenges to eating healthy. The class schedule, late nights and array of food choices all can interfere with achieving a balanced, nourishing diet. First-year students often struggle with establishing a healthy eating routine as they get used to their new schedule, friends and eating in the dining halls.

Brandeis Dining Services is committed to offering an array of healthy options throughout both dining halls. Here’s a sample of what we provide:

- More whole grain bread options at deli stations
- Low fat American cheese at deli stations
- Nonfat cottage cheese at salad bars
- Lowfat frozen yogurt
- Lowfat (flavored) and nonfat plain yogurt in parfaits and smoothies
- Tofu at salad bars and stir-fry stations (by request at Melting Pot in lower Usdan)
- Vegan calzones in Sherman
- Steamed vegetables at Home Zones & Balance stations
- Fat free refried beans
- Splenda sweetener
- Healthy snack options at Nature’s Balance in lower Usdan

Another tool for making healthy decisions in the dining halls is the Wise Choice program. Items that are lower in calories, fat and sodium will bear the Wise Choice logo. Check out the bulletin boards in each dining hall as well as the website (www.brandeis.campudish.com) for more information. It’s one more way we’re making it easier to eat healthy at school.

Eating for Energy

Are you one of those lucky people who just seem to cruise through the day, still going strong at 11 pm? Or do you regularly crash, maybe in the afternoon or at night before your work is done? Too many people spend the day running on “fumes”, only to load up at night which can rob them of the energy they need to get through the day and put them in a “post-Thanksgiving” state of somnolence in the evening. Try rearranging your food intake, having more earlier in the day. Include carbs at each meal. And don’t forget to drink plenty of water, too. Dehydration can rob you of physical and mental energy.

Healthy Eating Strategies

Keep Track of What You Eat

Eat Every 3-5 Hours

Plan Your Snacks

Have Fruit or Veggies with Every Meal

Limit Sandwiches to One Per Day

Limit Dessert to 2-3 Times Per Week

Include Protein with Lunch & Dinner

Contact the Nutritionist

Laura O’Gara, RD, LDN is available to meet with students at the Health Center Mondays through Thursdays. Visits are free and can be arranged by calling x63677.

She can also be reached by voice mail at x63696 or email at : logara@brandeis.edu

Got a quick question or want to know what’s in the food? Look for Laura in the dining halls: Wed lunch in Sherman  Thur lunch in Usdan
Exercise Your Options

Just as it’s hard to establish a healthy eating routine, it can be hard to get into a regular exercise habit at school. While varsity and club athletes have built-in practices and competitions, other students have to find the time and motivation to attend to their fitness needs. Here are a few suggestions to get you started:

- Group fitness classes. Check out the athletics website for more information
- Walk around the outdoor or indoor track
- Jog down South Street
- Walk to Main Street or Moody Street to do errands
- Take the long way to class
- Take extra trips up and down Rabb steps or in your dorm
- Put on a favorite CD and dance in your room

Aim for at least 3 days a week, for a total of 30-60 minutes per day. Make sure you’re exercising hard enough to get your heart rate up. Use the “talk test” to determine whether you’re in the “zone”: if you can carry on a conversation without getting too breathless, you’re doing okay.

If you’re someone who has trouble getting started, find someone to buddy up with and make a date to work out together. Pencil in your times to exercise in your planner and, if something comes up, be sure to reschedule.

Don’t be your own worst enemy, either. Be flexible in your exercise approach—choose a variety of activities and keep it fun. Don’t hold yourself to working out every day—set sustainable goals instead.

The Truth About Carbs

Not too long ago, everyone was into “carb-bashing”. If you weren’t on Atkins or the South Beach diet, you felt very conspicuous having pasta or bread. Even though we have moved away from those popular fad diets, people still have a lingering feeling that eating carbs is bad for them.

Here’s some of the straight scoop on carbs and how your body handles them—

In a balanced diet, carbohydrates are the body’s chief source of fuel. When you eat an apple or a bagel, you effortlessly break down the carbs into glucose (sugar), the basic currency of energy. Your brain and muscles can’t function without glucose. In fact, as far as your body is concerned, a steady supply of blood sugar is just as vital as a pulse.

The average adult requires approximately 100 grams of carbohydrates a day. When you drop carbs out of your diet or a meal, your body doesn’t rev the way it should, leaving you feeling sluggish, drowsy and feeble. Not a good combination—especially if you have to go to class, write a paper or work out in the gym.

Loading up on carbs or sugary desserts and snacks is not the way to go, either. Many people crash a few hours after eating a high-carb meal. This sinking feeling is the result of too much insulin arriving too late, causing the body’s blood sugar to drop.

How then, can a person live in harmony with carbs?
- Use high fiber carbs in your meals to slow the rise in blood sugar and keep it in a moderate range for a longer period of time
- Use protein and healthy fat to also slow down the rate at which carbs are digested
- When whole grains are not available, use fruit and veggies to add fiber to the meal

Food Allergies: Eating Safely in the Dining Halls

Do you have a food allergy? If so, please contact Laura O’Gara, RD, LDN to discuss your options in the dining halls. Colleges and universities across the country are seeing more students coming to school with food allergies and Brandeis is no exception.

Dining Services currently accommodates students with a variety of food allergies such as gluten, peanut and tree nut, milk, MSG and wheat.

While food manufacturers are required to list the six most common allergens on their labels, food service establishments do not typically publish this information for the food they serve.

Laura maintains a current reference on the products that are used on campus and consults with management on how to prepare and serve food safely to food-allergic patrons that are known to us.

Specialty items are ordered and kept on hand for use in the dining halls and are also for sale in the C-store. Some accommodations require a student to call ahead to make a special meal request.

Laura O’Gara can be reached at x63696 or by email at logara@brandeis.edu.