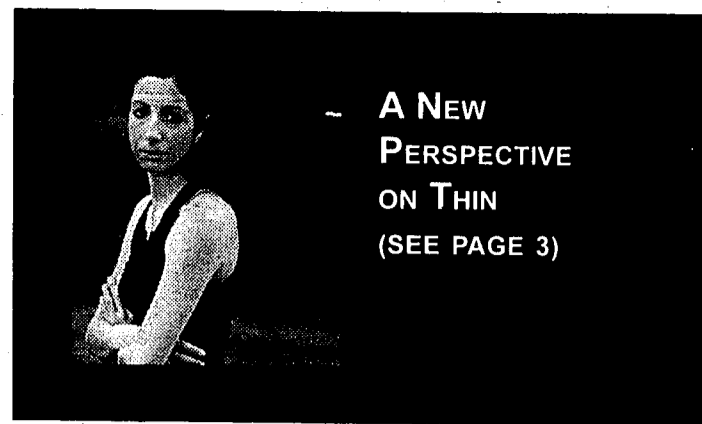
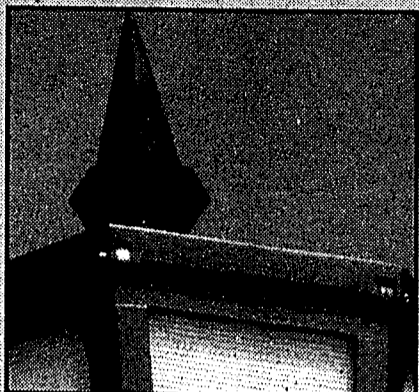


the MEREDITH Herald



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STUDENTS CAN AFFORD HEALTHY SNACKING

Janice Swab
Contributing Writer

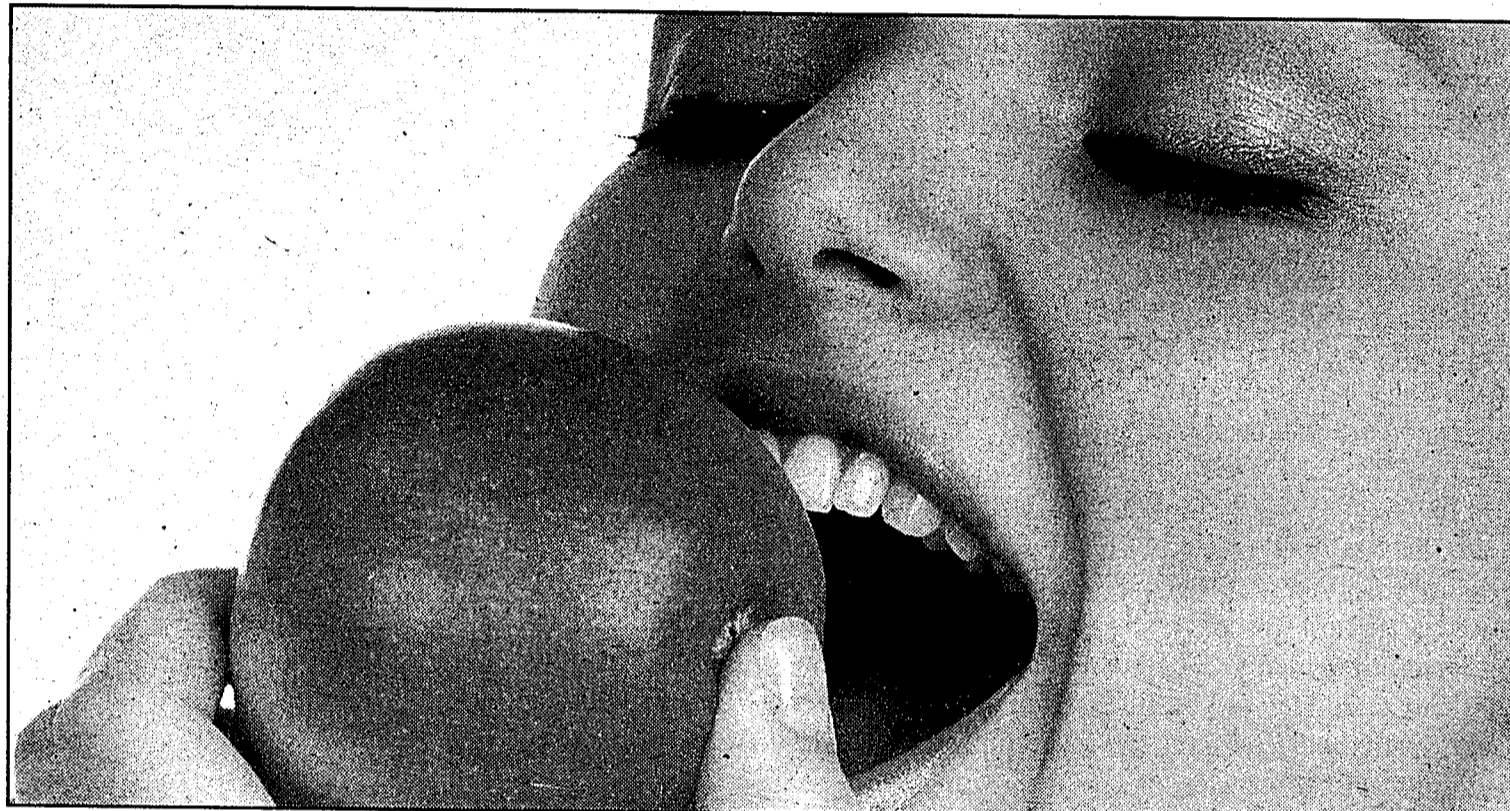


Photo Courtesy www.nutrition-for-athletes.com

I frequently hear that students want to snack on healthy foods but think they cannot afford to do so. Hamburgers, pizza or other high calorie foods are so easy to grab and eat on the run—and they taste really good to most students. What's a poor student to do? Let's consider some aspects of the "snacking problem" along with some workable solutions to make 2009 a healthier year.

1) Reduce the need for snacks whenever possible.

Students who eat in the Meredith Dining Hall have many healthy choices at every meal. The fruits, vegetables, whole grain breads and healthy protein choices are there at every meal. What does this have to do with snacking and budget? Eating regular meals that you've already paid for seems a sensible idea. Breakfast can be eaten by anyone—the Dining Hall opens well before any class begins. After a good breakfast that includes protein, you don't feel the necessity for a heavy lunch so salads could be the main part of that meal. Eating dinner toward the end of the Dining Hall hours (though not running in at the last minute) can mean less snacking early in the evening.

2) Work on alternatives to your usual snacks.

The three-healthy-meals-per-day option doesn't always work because some students don't schedule a "lunch period," but that does not give an excuse to snack on unhealthy foods. There are healthy choices in the Bee-Hive; low-fat yoghurt and fruit are only two of the options there. With a little planning you can always carry a healthy, filling snack that can be nibbled over a period of time rather than wolfed down as pizza and hamburgers usually are. Nibbling will lead to eating less because you do not begin to feel full until sometime after beginning to eat. Dried fruit and nut mixtures (without the M&M's) are good and they do not need to be bought already mixed. Pretzels, whole wheat crackers, snacks made with "natural" peanut butter are a few of

the snacks that carry easily. Compare the cost of the ingredients that you prefer for making your own snacks that last for several days with the fast food you might be eating during that time. You'll probably be surprised at how much you're spending on fast food. Always keep some fruit to snack on if you get hungry before dinner. The large backpacks students carry should always contain a source of healthy snacks for the body as well as food for the mind.

Keep a record of your snack habits and what worked best for you and refer to it when you're making your plans for renewing a supply of snack foods.

Good intentions go awry during late night activities. At this time it is necessary to really work hard to make those good snack choices: flavored rather than buttered popcorn, low-calorie drinks, whole grain crackers and breads. Don't forget the power of friends who are willing to help you make good choices at these times.

3) Drink before you snack.

Often the biggest sources of hidden (and unsatisfying) calories are those that students drink. The last time I checked, North Carolina was the number one state in soft drink consumption per capita. What a sad statistic! Water is always available and water bottles can be refilled at water fountains. Tea and coffee do not need to be high calorie drinks and fruit juice is never a good option when compared to the real thing. Another thing to think about: much of the time when we feel hungry, we are actually thirsty.

4) Get as much sleep as you need. It is very difficult to resist snacking on junk food when you're really tired.

5) Exercise every day.

Unfortunately, this is where too many students fail in their good intentions. Exercise is actually the easi-

See SNACKING, PAGE 2

Green Tip for the Week of February 18

Bookmark web pages instead of printing them out for research.

During the 2008-09 academic year, Meredith College's campus theme is "Sustaining our Environment: Developing our Greenprint." To help the Meredith community make daily choices that are beneficial to the environment, Angels for the Environment have compiled a year's worth of tips for greener living. To view green tips from previous weeks, visit www.meredith.edu/campus-theme/environmental-tips.htm.

