

CAMPUS LIFE

CAMPUS NUTRITION

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During the 2008-2009 school year, the Meredith Counseling Center saw 225 women. Twenty-eight of these women rated body image issues as their top 3 concerns. While these are the official statistics, Beth Meir of the counseling center guesses that the rates of body dissatisfaction are much higher in the Meredith community. As women, every time we open a magazine or turn on the television, we are constantly bombarded with body images. When we look in the mirror and compare ourselves to those images, we do not match. Luckily for the Meredith community, there are many faculty members who are trained to make us feel and look our best!

Amy Olsen, member of the Department of Exercise and Sports Science and cross country coach, has worked at Meredith for five years. In those years, she has not seen an increase or decrease in the body size of Meredith women. "I believe it has been consistent," Olsen states. However, Olsen has several suggestions to make a healthier and happy college experience. For the average student, Olsen advises 20-30 minutes daily of exercise. Olsen believes that exercising daily helps to form the habit and makes your body and mind more comfortable with exercise. Senior Lauren Connell states "I think when it comes to exercise and nutrition, balance is the key. Get yourself moving every day, and eat lots of fruits and veggies!"

Olsen also suggests that you should not fear the word "exercise." Instead, Olsen suggests that you getting a buddy or group to exercise with and "surround yourself with positive people who will build each other up and be supportive." Olsen also suggests making variety in the exercise. Meredith has a full gym and a swimming pool. The campus can be used for power walking, jogging, or bike riding. Olsen also recommends joining a team; an organized sport will give lots of variety and will provide a strong support system, not to mention offers a lot of fun. Olsen strongly advises that women keep their workouts fun, whatever they choose. Most of all, Olsen whole-heartedly stresses that moderation is the key to anything. Do not overload exercise or push your body to unsafe limits.

Belk Dining Hall has made strides in improving the healthful quality of the food in the past few years. Senior Lauren Connell has headed up many of those improvements. Thanks to her, the dining hall now makes several nutritional options each day. Her freshman and sophomore year, the dining hall did not offer a lean meat or healthy carbs, such as whole wheat bread or pasta. However, with the help of a "Healthy Week" where several nutritious options were served and comment cards requesting more healthy options, the dining hall has made changes. The SAAC, a campus organization

for student athletes, also assisted in bringing about the new changes.

For example, for breakfast there is a full fruit bar each day with granola and yogurt options. There are 13 choices of cereal; as well as 2%, 1%, and soy milk. A classic breakfast is served as well. There are always a variety of bagels and breads with a toaster available. Dr. Eschbach noted in a nutrition seminar geared towards athletes that the key to nutrition is variety. Eschbach advises students to eat something different every day and avoid categorizing foods as "good" or "bad". Be conscious about choices, but not obsessive.

Katie Helms, a senior nutrition major living off campus in her own apartment, offers some advice for nutritional eating on a budget. "I like to shop at the local farmer's market; the food is fresh and local as well as sometimes being cheaper than the grocery store." Helms also believes in cutting coupons and reading sales papers. Helms advises writing a grocery list and sticking to the list. This will help to control spending. Also, spontaneous purchases are typically junk food. While bargain shopping does take time, the money saved is well worth the effort.

While healthy lifestyles can contribute to positive body image perceptions, Amy Olsen stresses that you must avoid "see yourself as an image, but [rather] as a person. Think about the other areas of life where you excel; your

kindness, intelligence, sense humor." With this line of thinking and the positive changes on campus, Meredith is on the right track in healthful living.

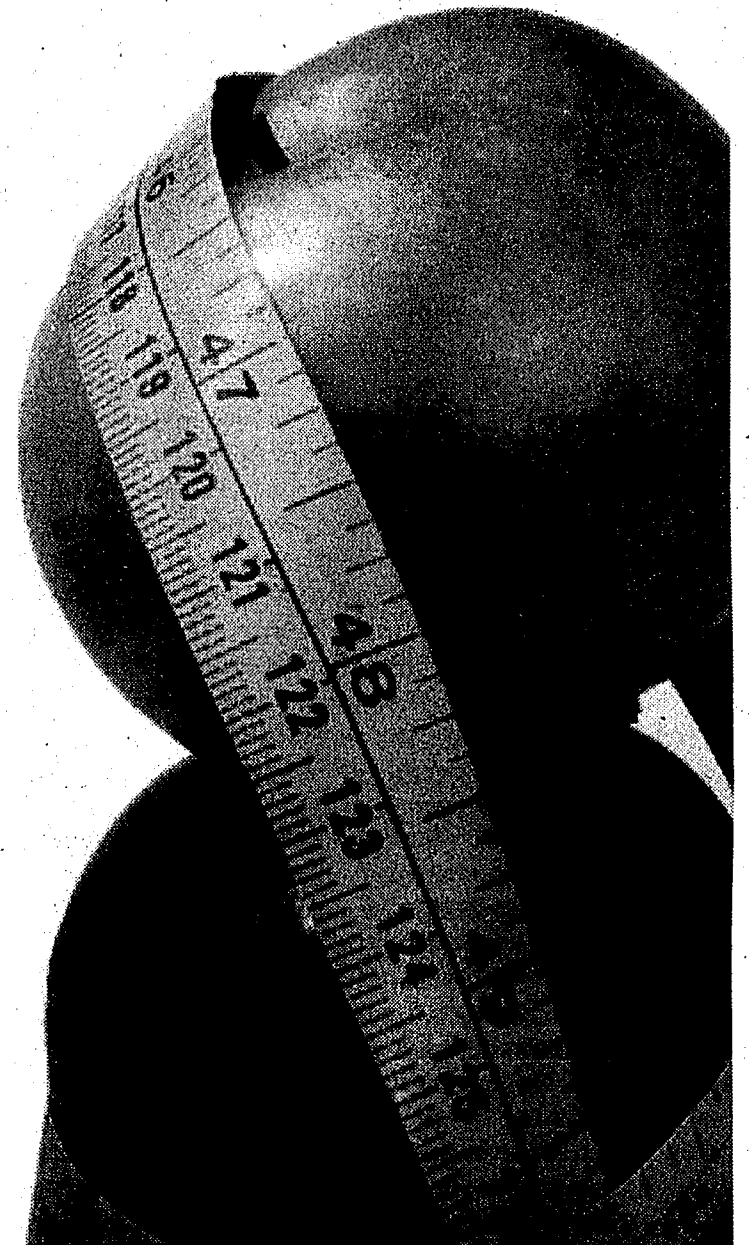


Photo courtesy <http://beaut.ie/blog/wp-content/uploads/2007/06/healthy%20eating.jpg>

ask gigi

Dear Gigi,

I am not going to be able to travel home for fall break this year, and it will be the first fall break I will have stayed here in North Carolina. I am already longing to go home, but I am afraid I will be even more homesick when my friends leave to go home for the break. There is not much to do on campus, and I am still not very familiar with the Raleigh area even though I have been at Meredith for two years.. Can you give some advice so that I am not too homesick during the break?

Sincerely,

Homesick

Dear Homesick,

Let me start by assuring you that you will not be the only one on campus during break. There are others who cannot go home for different reasons. I have a couple of ideas for you. If you do not want to stay on campus for the break or you want to find a way to keep busy, talk to your friends who are going home and see if you can go with them. If that does not work, then go to the office of Student Leadership and Service and talk to Tabitha Underwood about the service trip that will be going on over break. Finally, if neither of those two options work, do not worry, staying on campus is not the worst thing in the world. It is quiet, so it is a peaceful place to do homework, read a book, or watch a movie. If you need to get off campus there is always something going on in downtown Raleigh, at the malls, Cameron Village, and of course the fair grounds. You have so many options that there is no way you will have time to feel homesick.

Sincerely,

Gigi