

Healthy Dawgs Presents

# An Incoming College Freshman's Guide: How to Make Healthy Choices in College

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# Table of Contents

## 1. Time management pg. 3

- Strategies for Time Management pg. 3
- References pg. 7

## 2. Sleep pg. 8

- Why college students are sleep deprived pg. 8
- How much sleep should a college student get pg. 9
- Benefits of getting enough sleep pg. 9
- Tips to get enough sleep pg. 12
- How to set a sleep schedule pg. 12
- References pg. 14

## 3. Nutrition/exercise pg. 15

- Why do college students gain weight? Pg. 15
- 411 on dining halls pg.16
- My plate guidelines pg. 17
- Dining hall hacks pg. 18
- Tips to avoid weight gain in college pg.18
- The importance of exercise in college pg.20
- How much exercise should you get pg. 21
- How to stay fit on campus pg.22
- Exercises for your dorm room pg.22
- References pg.23

## 4. Stress pg. 25

- What is stress pg.25
- Noticing the behavior pg. 26
- Coping mechanisms pg. 27
- References pg.28

## 5. Mental health pg. 29

- Common types among college students pg. 30
- Resources pg. 33

- 
- References pg. 35

## 6. Alcohol pg. 36

- College alcoholism pg.36
- Alcohol use disorder pg. 36
- Peer pressure pg.37
- Tips to control peer pressure pg. 38
- Binge drinking pg.38
- Negative consequences pg. 39
- Impact on course work pg. 40
- References pg. 41

## 7. Drugs Use pg. 42

- Drug introduction pg.42
- Drug addiction pg.42
- Marijuana use pg.43
- Other drugs pg.45
- Consequences of use pg.45
- Treatment help pg. 46
- References pg.47

## 8. Sexual health pg. 48

- The basics pg.48
- Consent pg.48
- What are STDs pg.49
- Getting tested pg. 50
- Where can I get a test pg.50
- Preventing STDs pg. 51
- Resources pg. 52
- References pg.53

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# Time Management

Every student comes to college with a different understanding of time management but within the first few months it is really put to the test. Knowing how to manage time can make or break a student. They no longer have someone making them go to class or get on the school bus or feeding them and suddenly they aren't sure how to fit it all in with the new course load. The sooner they learn to manage their time, the sooner they will be able to enjoy everything college has to offer.

## Why is time management important?

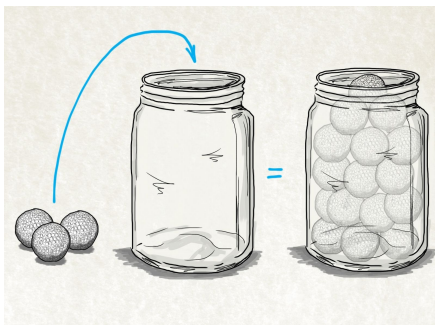
It can...

- Prevent stress
- Help you complete everything
- Give you more free time

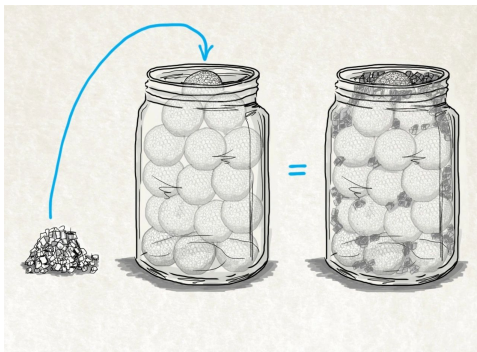
## 5 strategies for time management

### 1. Set priorities

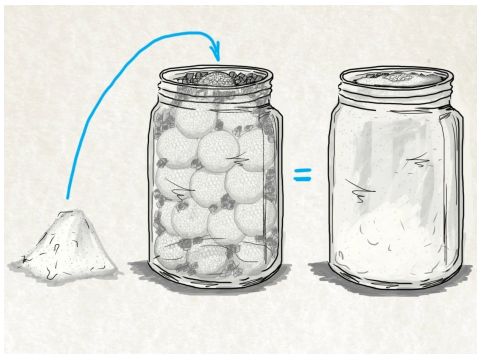
Pickle Jar Theory: Your time is like a pickle jar and you get to use it however you want.



First fill the jar with big rocks. These are big things you need to accomplish or the regular things in your schedule like work and classes.



The jar looks full with all the big rocks but there is plenty of room for lots of little pebbles. This would be all the homework, and projects that need to be planned out.



The jar looks even more full now but there is still room to add sand. These are the little, less important or less urgent things in your schedule like social time that are of value but more flexible.



The jar doesn't look like it can fit anything else in it but there is still room to add a little bit of water. This is all the little extra stuff. The things that can just be squeezed into your schedule.

Source: <https://balancedaction.me/2012/10/17/the-jar-of-life-first-things-first/>

Using the pickle jar theory when planning your time can help you prioritize and use your time wisely. It also gives you a starting point as you schedule things. First come the big things and then you will be able to fill in all the holes until you have used your time the best you can (Wright, 2002).

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## 2. Use a planning tool

Having a place to plan your time is important. There are several options for scheduling your day whether you prefer handwriting your schedule or would like it on your phone. There are several agendas and planners available in stores like Walmart, Target and even Dollar General. Scheduling apps are also a good option. Using the calendar app on your phone is an efficient way to schedule your weeks. The Google calendar app is another good option to plan your weeks and color code events.

At the beginning of each semester, sit down with your syllabi and schedule when you have school breaks and when big projects or tests are due. This will help you have a good idea of what your semester will look like and help you plan appropriately. If you have three tests in one week you won't want to schedule a busy weekend and need to know that in advance.

## 3. Don't procrastinate

Procrastination plagues almost every college student but if you plan ahead you can accomplish your tasks diligently. The best way to avoid procrastination is to have a study plan. This is especially important if you have several tests at once. If you plan to study a little bit at a time over a week or two, you won't have to cram it all overnight. This takes just a little planning ahead of time.

## 4. Manage external time wasters and avoid multitasking

Phones are one of the largest time wasters. They often act as the water in our jar, taking up all the extra time in our day as we stare at the screen. Maximizing the scheduled time for each task is important. The best way to do this is to focus on one thing at a time.

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### **Tips for focusing**

- Turn your phone on do not disturb
- Set daily time limits on social media apps
- Put your phone in a different room when you study
- Turn off computer notifications
- Study outside of your house
- Listen to music without words as you study

## **5. Stay healthy**

Nothing gets in the way of a schedule like being sick. It is important to make time for things such as meals, sleep and working out. You'll do your best work when you are well rested, full and healthy. These are also good times to socialize so, eat dinner with friends, go to exercise classes or go on walks together (Chapman & Rupured, 2014).

**Remember that it will take time to find out what works best.**

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- Wright, J. (2002). Time management: The pickle jar theory. *Project Management*. Retrieved from <https://alistapart.com/article/pickle/>



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# Sleep for College Students

As we all know, sleep plays a vital role in our daily functioning. The amount of sleep we receive affects our daily performance. This is especially important for college students who are often balancing school, work, social life, health, and adjusting to a new stage of life. Adopting proper sleeping habits as an incoming freshman will create routines and behaviors that will stick with you throughout the years to come. In this section you will learn about why sleep is crucial for college students, how often you should sleep, tips for sleeping better, and how to establish a proper sleep schedule.

## **Why College Students are Sleep Deprived:**

Research shows that 70% of college students do not get the daily recommended amount of sleep. Additionally, it has been shown that the United States has the sleepest students in the world (Jordan, 2019). Below are some of the major causes of over tiredness in students.

**Sleep Disorders** According to a study of 1,845 students conducted by the Journal of American College Health, 27% were at risk for developing a sleep disorder. The most common sleep disorders among students are restless legs disorder and periodic limb movement disorder, insomnia, circadian rhythm sleep disorders and obstructive sleep apnea (Gaultney, 2010).

**Technology and Social Media Usage** The blue light emitted from electronics tricks your brain into thinking it's day time and your body decreases the amount of melatonin it secretes, which makes it more difficult to fall asleep (National Sleep Foundation, 2019).

**Late Night Partying** Having fun isn't a bad thing, but several nights of staying up late can take a toll on you mentally, physically and academically. "Late night partying gets in the way of consistent sleep schedules and the required amount of sleep per night" (McCullum, 2019).

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**Drugs and Alcohol** The stress alone can be enough to keep students awake at night but some turn to drugs and alcohol to unwind. While alcohol and some drugs are sedatives that induce sleep, that doesn't mean students get quality sleep when they've been drinking or are on drugs. Both alcohol and drugs can cause fragmented sleep which means you're more likely to wake up in the middle of the night and never achieve REM sleep (McCullum, 2019).

## **How Much Sleep Should a College Student Get?**

College Students should be getting around 7-9 hours of sleep each night on average (McCullum, 2019).

A good nights rest is a combination of enough hours of sleep and quality sleep patterns. These patterns include (McCullum, 2019):

- **Sleep latency** – How long it takes to go from “lights out” to asleep
- **Sleep efficiency** – The total time in bed compared to time spent sleeping
- **Wake after sleep onset** – Or “WASO”, which is the amount of time you wake up in the middle of the night before actually waking up
- **Wake time after sleep offset** – Or “WASF”, which accounts for long periods of wakefulness after an unusual early morning awakening
- **REM latency** – The time between sleep onset and REM sleep

## **The Benefits of Getting Enough Sleep**

Teens and college students who fit in seven to eight hours of sleep every night are more likely to see the following benefits:

**Students who get enough sleep are more likely to perform better academically.** One in four students surveyed reported that sleep deprivation negatively impacted their grades

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and in some cases, resulted in the need to withdraw from a course entirely. It has also been found that students who didn't maintain a regular sleep schedule were more likely to perform poorly in class compared to those who did. Staying up to study means longer exposure to light which can affect the release of melatonin. When melatonin is released later in the night, the circadian clock is pushed back as well, causing the body to feel like it's in another time zone USA TODAY (Gautley, 2010; Jordan, 2019; Phillips et al., 2017, Samsel, 2017).

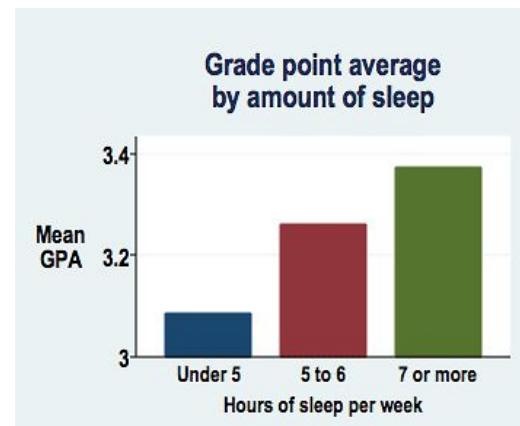


Photo-Source: [https://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2008/01/23\\_ucues2.shtml](https://www.berkeley.edu/news/media/releases/2008/01/23_ucues2.shtml)

**Increased sleep results in improved memory** The more sleep you get, the more efficient your brain can process information and therefore prevents the shrinking of the hippocampus, otherwise known as the region of your brain that is responsible for memory storage (Hershner et al., 2017; McCullum, 2019).

**Lowered risk of obesity** when students are sleepy their bodies produce larger amounts of the hormone ghrelin, aka the "hunger hormone," which stimulates appetite and fat storage. As a result, your body craves food when tired. Sleep also increases leptin levels in the body which curbs appetite (McCullum, 2019).

**Less chance of getting sick** During sleep, the body releases proteins called cytokines, which are needed when you have an infection or are under stress. If you're chronically sleep deprived, cytokine production is reduced and your body also releases fewer

antibodies, which makes you more susceptible to viruses. Lack of sleep also affects recovery time so when you do get a cold or the flu, it'll take you longer to get over it (Olson, 2019).

**Improved coordination** Information reports that in a survey of 1,039 college students, 16% admitted to drowsy driving and 2% percent said they got into a car accident due to lack of sleep (McCullum, 2019).

**Enhanced mood** Getting a proper night's sleep can help students feel prepared. Prolonged sleep deprivation has been linked to mood disorders such as anxiety or depression and other mental illnesses (Mattress Help, 2019; Winsler et al., 2015)

[Connections between sleep and mental illness in college students \(Gualtney, 2010; Mattress Help, 2019\)](#)

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <p><b>Anxiety</b></p> <p>Lack of sleep contributes to anxiety and, in turn, anxiety prevents sleep, resulting in a vicious cycle. The natural reaction among college students to a new environment, new challenges, new responsibilities, and new freedoms is to experience some anxiety. So, the risk is high that their already-diminished amounts of sleep also become poor quality sleep</p> | <p><b>Depression</b></p> <p>When we do not get enough sleep or when we suffer from insomnia, we have higher levels of depression than people who sleep well. Studies have found that people who are sleep-deprived are 5 times more likely to develop depression</p>  |
| <p><b>ADHD</b></p> <p>ADHD is known to contribute to higher rates of daytime sleepiness with as many as 50% of ADHD patients experiencing it. If a college student has a diagnosis of ADHD, the symptoms can be multiplied profoundly by the sleep deprivation they may experience as a natural part of college life</p>   | <p><b>Addiction</b></p> <p>Sleep loss may play a notable role in a young adult's susceptibility to first using alcohol and drugs and can then contribute to full-blown addiction. Lack of sleep and sleep disorders often lead to increased use of caffeine and other stimulants like energy drinks. These may seem harmless in reasonable quantities, but energy drinks are linked to increased use and abuse of marijuana, alcohol, and prescription drugs.</p> |

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## Tips for College Students to Get Enough Sleep (McCullum, 2019)

1. Take proper naps- take naps before 4pm for no longer than 20-30 minutes to avoid the groggy feeling caused by disrupting your sleep cycle
2. Set a sleep schedule and stick to it- your body systems need a “clock” to function at their highest potential and benefit from consistency
3. Avoid afternoon caffeine- avoid coffee and caffeinated drinks after 4pm
  - a. Caffeine affects brain wave activity and can impact a person for 8 hours after drinking
4. Shut off electronics before bed- students should stop using technology 1 hour before bed- blue light tricks your brain into thinking it’s day time (National Sleep Foundation, 2019).

## How To Set a Sleep Schedule

Just a few adjustments to your daily routine can help you go to bed and wake up at the same time every day. These tips will help you take control of your internal clock (Mattress Help, 2019):

1. Create a sleep diary. Determine how much sleep your body requires.
  - a. For one week, do not set an alarm. Wake up naturally (not easy when you’re in college, but try it during a break).
  - b. Each morning, write down how many hours you slept.

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- c. At the end of the week, average the hours to get a good idea of the amount of sleep you need.
  - d. Commit to getting this amount of sleep as often as possible.
2. Be consistent- set a daily sleep and wake time and stick to them even on weekends
  3. Make gradual adjustments- work in 15 minute increments over a period of 3-4 weeks
    - a. For example, if you usually go to bed at 12 and are trying to be asleep by 10:30 first start at 11:45 for a few days and then 11:30 and so on
  4. Light exposure- open the curtains in the morning to tell your body it is morning time and cue your brain to start the day
  5. Skip the snooze button- having a schedule should allow you to skip using an alarm all together (National Sleep Foundation, 2019).

If you follow these guidelines you can look like this in class!



Source: <https://www.dreamstime.com/photos-images/fashion-students-being-attentive-class.html>

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# Nutrition and Exercise in College

## How to Avoid the So-Called “Freshman 15”

The freshman 15 is a highly debated phenomenon in which freshman students are said to gain fifteen pounds their first semester of college. However, luckily for you this number tends to be more in the 5-8 pound range (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 2019). Although this number differs for each person, research suggests that college students will gain weight over the course of their college careers for a variety of reasons. However, it is important to remember that not everyone does gain weight in college (Obesity Action Committee, 2019). This section aims to provide strategies to eat healthy and exercise in college, even including tips on the dreaded dining halls. With the benefits explained and examples given, this section intends to give you strategies to help prevent the so-called “freshman 15” from the beginning.

### **Why Do College Students Gain Weight?**

College students tend to gain weight for many reasons. The most common reasons include (Obesity Action Committee, 2019; Zargorsky et al., 2011,):

- Eating late at night
- Overeating at dining halls
- Drinking excessive amounts of alcohol
- Energy drinks
- Lack of exercise
- Skipping meals
- Poor sleep schedules

For the incoming freshmen, the experience of transitioning to college means a change in routine and familiar surroundings. Independence is gained and guidance/limitations on lifestyle choices decline. New college students can now do what they want,



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when they want, and that importantly includes eating and drinking (Obesity Action Committee, 2019). While you can't control how difficult your coursework is, you can take steps to eat healthy and keep your weight in check. College is an adjustment, but it does not mean your health has to adjust as well. Before snacking, ask yourself if you're eating out of boredom. If you're stressed, anxious or feeling down, take a study break, surround yourself with friends, or take a short stroll. If this stress and anxiety feels unmanageable, seek on-campus student counseling services for assistance. Keep in mind, not all college students gain weight during their first year of school. The Journal of American College of Health (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 2019) reported that only half of college students gain weight during the school year. Further, for those who do see an increase in weight, on average, women gained 9 pounds and average men gained 13 over the course of their entire college career, not just their freshman year (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 2019). Implementing healthy eating and exercise strategies as a young adult is important because the habits you establish now are likely to carry into your adult life (Zargorsky et al., 2011).

## **The 411 On Dining Halls**

While having a meal-plan can be advantageous in terms of convenience, dining halls offer a large variety of unhealthy foods. Below are some tips on eating healthy on campus and making your meal plan work for you (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, 2019):

- Salad bars are a great option, but don't go overboard on cheese, bacon, croutons and other high-calorie add-ons. An oil-and-vinegar mix is a great low-calorie and tasty dressing option.
- Enjoy fruit for dessert, or save an apple or banana for a snack.

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- Follow the MyPlate guidelines when filling your plate at the cafeteria.
  - When indulging in a treat, practice portion control. It's all about balance!

**MyPlate Guidelines for College Students:** MyPlate serves as a guideline for how to fill your plate from what to eat to how much to eat. Specifically for college students, MyPlate suggests the following guidelines (ChooseMyPlate, 2019):

1. **Quality over Quantity**

Many dining halls post menus with nutrition information. Look at the menus ahead of time, so you can be ready to create healthy, balanced meals when you get there.

2. **Enjoy your food, but eat less**

To resist the urge of eating too much, take smaller portions and use a smaller plate.

3. **Drink Water**

Americans drink about 400 calories every day. Consider how often you drink sugary beverages such as sodas, coffee, energy drinks, juices, sweetened teas, and sports drinks. Drinking water instead of sugary beverages can help you manage your calories.

4. **Make half your plate fruits and vegetables**

Fruits and vegetables can add nutrition and flavor.

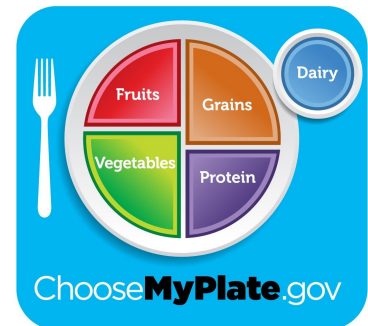
5. **Make it your own!**

Source:<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/WhatIsMyPlate>

Don't feel like you have to choose pre-made plates. Design your own meal by combining ingredients.

6. **Make dessert a special occasion**

Save dessert for a Friday night treat or on special occasions. When you can't resist, opt for something healthy, such as a fruit and yogurt parfait.



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## **Dining Hall Hacks (Crist, 2016):**

1. Use lemons and limes to enhance the flavor of food
2. Swap bread for a tortilla- this switch will help you save on carbohydrates
3. Replace soda with seltzer
4. Dress up plain oatmeal with fruits and nuts
5. Use salad bar for things other than salad! Lettuce wraps, carrots and dip, veggie platters- the options are endless
6. Make yogurt parfaits for breakfast or snacks

## **Tips To Avoid Weight Gain in College (Barlow, 2017):**

1. Do get enough sleep- As mentioned in the previous section, sleep can play a crucial role in keeping your body systems in check. The more sleep you get, the more energy you have to make healthy choices
2. Do not skip breakfast- Research has shown that skipping breakfast is related to impulse eating later on in the day. It is important to make time for this meal as it can set the tone for the rest of your day
3. Walk! While elevators, buses, and campus transportation may seem tempting, choose to walk as often as you can to classes, studying, the dining halls and back to your dorm
4. Study in places not surrounded by food- although the dining halls have a lot of snacks to keep you going, try studying in the library or in your dorm to prevent overeating

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5. Start meals with water, fruits, and vegetables as they will fill you up first
    - a. Eating a salad or vegetable soup before your lunch or dinner has been shown to help cut back on the calories consumed during the average meal. Why is this? Fruits and vegetables fill you up without filling you out, so they are kind to your figure but satisfying to your hunger
  6. Do not drink your calories
    - a. A 20-ounce bottle of soda, sports drinks, energy drinks, or sweetened coffee and teas can pack over 250 calories. Drink low-fat or skim milk with your meals and water (zero calories) in between
    - b. According to Medical News Today (MacGill, 2018), an average of 3.7 liters a day for men and 2.7 liters a day for women should be consumed. Note: this amount is also dependent on climate, activity, and pre-existing health status
  7. Keep Healthy snacks in your dorm- protein rich sources such as nuts, cheese, and hard boiled eggs are great options to keep in your dorm when you need that midday pick-me-up.



Source: <https://www.amherst.edu>

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**The Importance of Exercise in College** Exercising is shown to have a multitude of personal benefits. These benefits can be specifically appealing to college students facing large amounts of stress and responsibility. Below are some of the most advantageous benefits to exercising in college (American Intercontinental University, 2012):

**Stimulates brain cell development** Aerobic exercise has been shown to improve the function and amount of neurons, or brain cells, and therefore can be advantageous towards students in terms of cognitive functioning.

**Improves memory retention** The hippocampus is a structure in the brain that controls the formation, retention, and recall of memories. In most adults, the hippocampus starts to shrink slightly starting in the late 20s, leading to memory loss over time. However, exercise prevents this shrinkage and may even promote regrowth.

**Increases focus and concentration** Exercise helps to reduce stress and for that reason can help focus and concentration in class.

**Boosts mood** A 1999 Duke study into the effects of exercise on depression had some participants work out while others took a well-known anti-depressant medication. At the conclusion of the study, the exercise group showed as much improvement in mood as the medication group did. So, with this in mind, college students can benefit from regular exercise and improve their mood (Duke Today Staff, 2000).

**Reduces stress** Stress can lead to health problems, such as heart attacks and stomach problems. Exercise helps you sleep better and eases anxiety, and therefore can relieve the negative effects of stress on your body (American Intercontinental University, 2012).

## How much exercise should you get? (Hoffman, 2019)

A balanced, healthy fitness routine for any adult includes two key elements: Cardio exercise and strength training. And for many, regular stretching is an essential part of their regime.

The next page includes recommendations for how much exercise college students need.

**Please note:** You should always consult with your doctor before starting any new fitness routine.

|                   | What is it?  | What are the benefits?  | How often should I do this?  | Example Exercises   |
|-------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Cardio            | Cardio, also known as aerobic exercise, is any exercise that uses large muscle groups in a repetitive manner to increase heart rate. | There are many benefits to cardio, but among the most important are improved heart and lung functioning, weight loss, and a reduction in stress | A minimum of 2 hours and 30 minutes per week as recommended by the                       | -Walking briskly<br>-Dancing<br>-Jogging  |
| Strength Training | Activities that aim to increase muscle mass, strength, and endurance   | Strength training also has many benefits that include improved joint functioning, increased metabolism, and increased cardiac functioning       | At least twice a week to work with all muscle groups (Centers for Disease Control, 2019) | -chest press<br>-leg curls<br>-squats   |
| Stretching        | Exercises that stretch and flex muscles  | Increased flexibility, increased range of motion, improved injury prevention  | A minimum of 2 or 3 days a week (Centers for Disease Control, 2019)                      | Static stretching: Stretching the muscle to its furthest point and holding for 30 seconds |

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## How to Stay Fit on Campus (Hoffman, 2019):

**Fitness Facilities** Many universities have on campus fitness facilities to take advantage of. If your school does not offer these amenities, check out your local parks and tracks.

**Health and Nutrition Centers** Many universities also offer nutrition centers where counseling and guidance services are available

**Fitness Classes** At schools where on campus fitness centers are present, many of these centers will offer student classes such as Zumba or Cycling. Additionally, these centers tend to offer bundles and student discounts to make these services affordable.

## Exercises for your Dorm Room (Hoffman, 2019) :

You don't need a lot of space – or money – to work out. Below are a range of resources that provide inexpensive or free workouts you can try in your own room, many with no equipment required:

- Youtube (Youtube, 2019): This platform has a large variety of workouts available. Just search for what you are interested in and your set. Want to try something new? Check out BeFit (Youtube: BeFit, 2019).
- Pinterest (Pinterest, 2019): Try searching “workout videos” to obtain a large variety of sample exercises
- FitnessBlender(FitnessBlender, 2019): This website offers over 500 free workout videos and inexpensive workout plans created by two personal trainers

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# Stress

## What is Stress?

Stress is a body's reaction to various challenges. Stress produces a psychological reaction and causes a release of hormones to regulate the body's functions; the sudden release of hormones creates the "flight or fight" response. This response can result in accelerated breathing and increase heart rate, as well as dilation of the pupils among other symptoms.

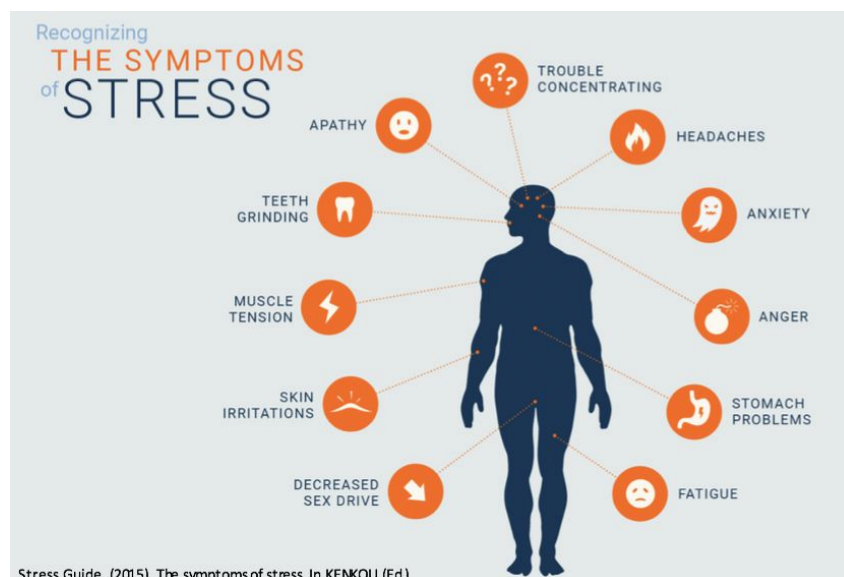
There are three kinds of stress: acute, episodic acute, and chronic acute stress. Acute stress is the most common form of stress and is often triggered by recent stressors. Acute stress happens to everyone and passes with time; it only becomes a problem when the periods last for an extended period of time or happens too frequently. Episodic acute stress is another form of acute stress that happens more frequently. This is a type of recurring stress that often pops up in a particular pattern when worrying about things that are going on in your life. Chronic acute stress is the most severe form of stress that seems to never go away. This type of stress often leads to a decline in health (Cohen, 2019). There have been growing numbers among college students who experience high stress. Stress can be caused by living away from home for the first time, academic demands, and finances amongst other things (Learn Psychology, 2019). Dealing with stress can lead to many adverse side effects including emotional, academic, and health problems (Yusufov, Nicoloso-SantaBarbara, Grey, Moyer, & Lobel, 2019). Understanding the different resources and various ways to reduce stress is important for a college student to know. This could prevent stress from becoming out of hand and causing health issues.

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## Noticing the Behavior Changes

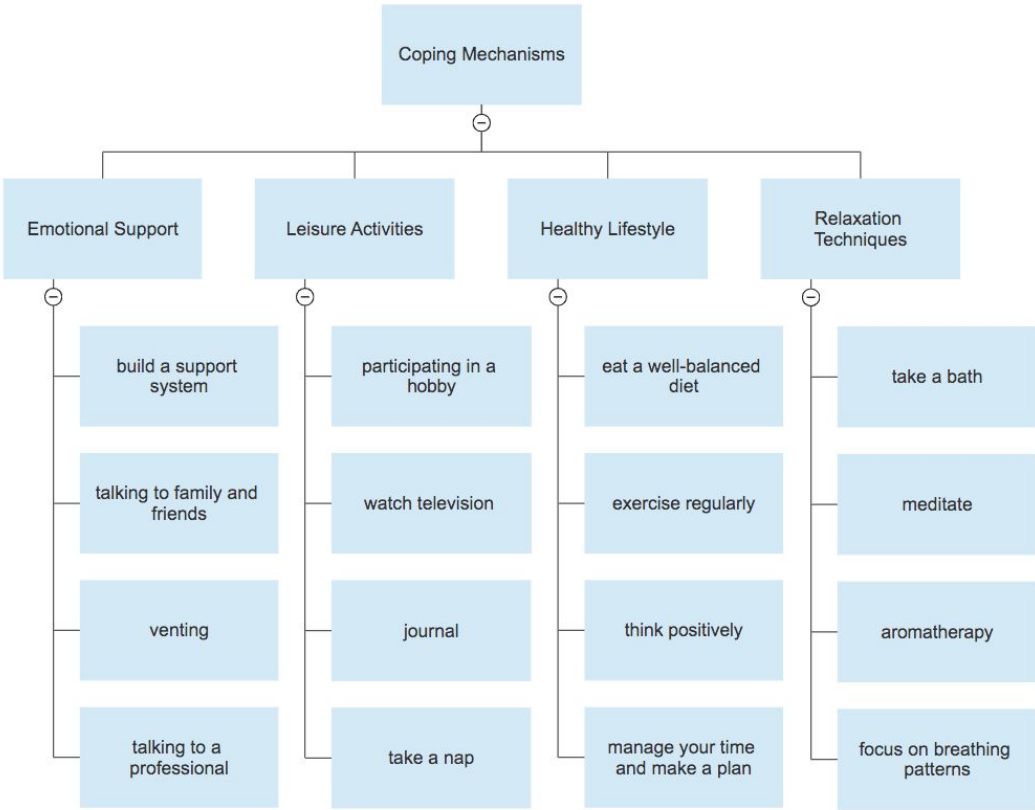
Behavior change is the easiest symptom of stress to identify. Early symptoms are often ignored until they progress and demand attention. The faster you are able to identify your stress cues, the faster you are able to take steps to deal with the stress in a healthy, productive way. There are a wide variety of symptoms that include changes in our body, thoughts, feelings, relationships, spirituality, and behavior (Michigan State University, 2017).

The easiest symptoms to notice are the ones that are within the body, thoughts, and feelings. Bodily changes can include symptoms from anywhere to change in appetite to sleeplessness. A person dealing with stress may become more anxious, sad, frustrated, and even experience mood swings. They may also become forgetful, confused, spaced out, and/or have negative thoughts. When dealing with high stress situations, a person may feel lonely and want to be left along which in turn affects their relationships. They may feel like they are unworthy and feel like they are losing the meaning of their life. Stress can also cause changes in behavior that are bad health choices. People who are stressed may turn to alcohol or cigarettes/vapes for relief. They may also have aggressive behaviors, such as yelling or slamming doors, in order to relieve some stress.



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# Coping Mechanisms



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# Mental Health Disorders

## Introduction

According to the American Psychological Association, ninety-five percent of college counseling centers have had a growing number of students with significant psychological problems (Mistler, 2012). Mental health disorders account for nearly one half of disease burden among college aged students in the United States (Hunt & Eisenberg, 2010). There are seven main groups of mental health disorders: mood disorders, anxiety disorders,

personality disorders, psychotic disorders, eating disorders, trauma-related disorders, and substance abuse disorders (Healthdirect, 2018). Untreated mental illnesses can have negative impacts on academic successes, productivity, substance use, and relationships. Noticing symptoms of various mental health disorders is important, so the individual can receive help before the disorder starts to negatively affect day-to-day functions.

**20%**  
of college students say they feel stressed "most of the time."  
[Source: AP.]

**10%**  
of college students had thoughts of suicide  
[Source: AP.]

**34%**  
of college students report feeling depressed at least at one point within the last 90 days  
[Source: ADAA.]

**13%**  
of college students have been diagnosed with depression, anxiety or other mental health condition.  
[Source: ADAA.]

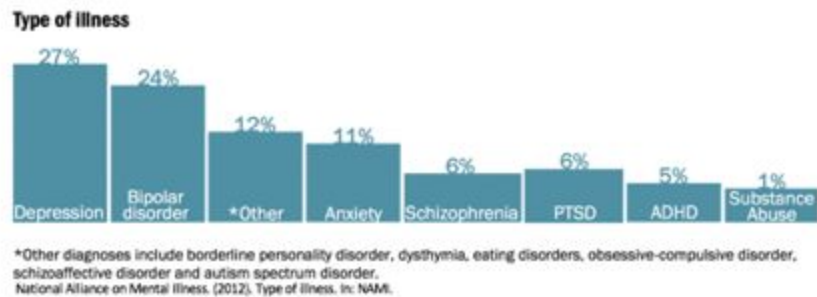
**80%**  
of college students say they sometimes or often feel stressed  
[Source: ADAA.]

About half of surveyed college students felt overwhelmed with anxiety at least once within the last **12 months**.  
[Source: APA.]

Learn Psychology. (2019a). College stress by the numbers In.

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## Common Types Among College Students



### Anxiety

Anxiety is the most common mental health concern in the country with more than forty million adults suffering from an anxiety disorder. According to the National College Health Assessment, 63% of students reported having overwhelming anxiety within the past year (LeBlanc N., 2019). Anxiety often stems from the changes a student experiences while in college. Although a student is at risk for developing an anxiety disorder, the first year of college is the time with the highest risk of the onset of anxiety due to the new transition.

When experiencing anxiety, people typically experience a few common symptoms. These symptoms can include persistent fear/worry, restlessness, anticipating the worst, headaches and fatigue (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2017). See the figure below for common risk factors.



(National Alliance of Mental Illness, 2017), (National Institute of Health, 2018a), (Mayo Clinic, 2019)

## Depression

Depression is often misinterpreted as a “rough patch” among college students, but it is a serious mental health condition that requires medical care. This disorder can affect a student’s ability to work, study, interact with others, and even take care of themselves. Some individuals may only experience one depressive episode, but most individuals experience recurrent episodes.

Symptoms to look for when experiencing a depressive episode include loss of interest in activities, change in appetite, sleep disturbance/sleeping too much, difficulty concentrating, fatigue and suicidal thoughts. See the figure below for common risk factors.





(National Institute of Health, 2018b)

## Eating Disorders

During college years, young adults are most at risk for developing an eating disorder. The changes a college student experiences mixed with underlying mental health issues can cause these disorders. These disorders stem from the need of feeling in control of choices and the worry of having the “perfect body.” According to the National Eating

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Disorders Association, full-blown eating disorders happen between the ages of 18 and 21. See the figure below for common risk factors.

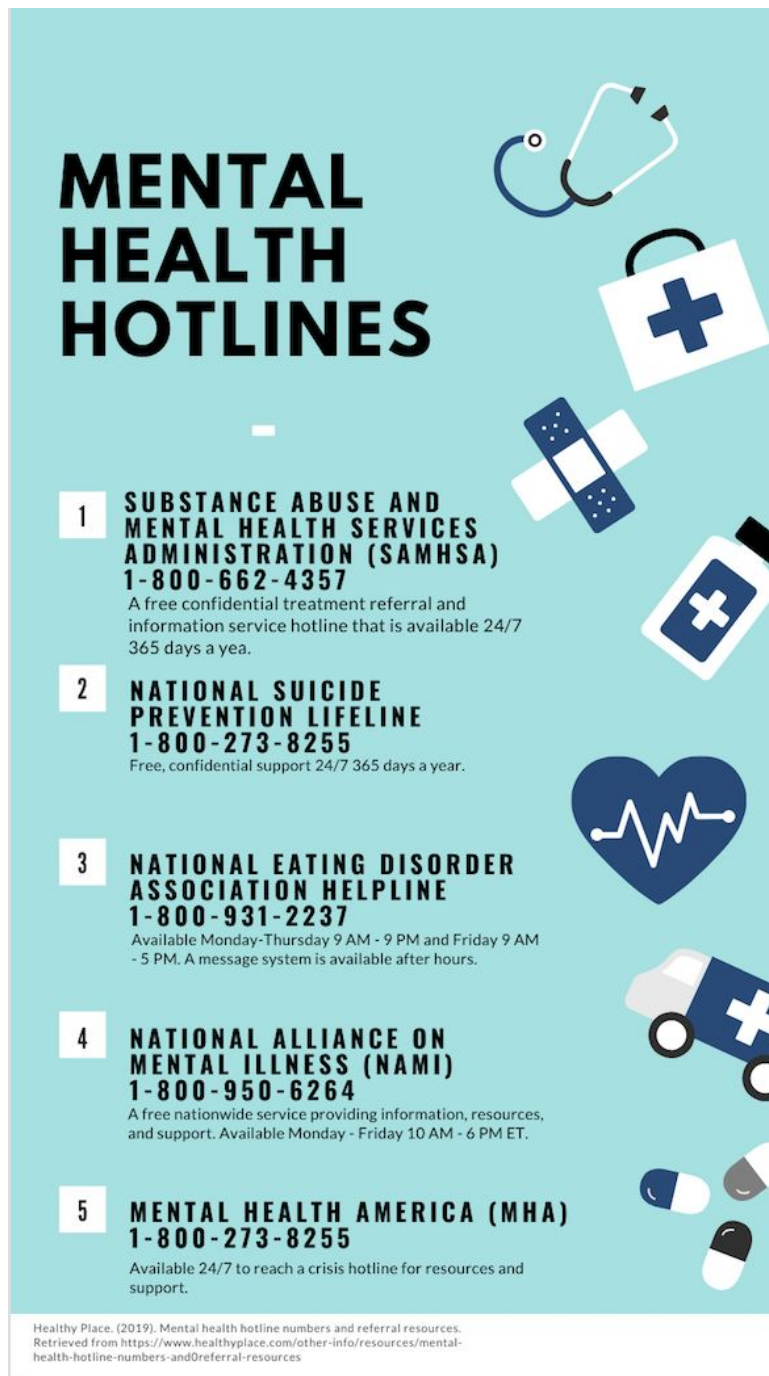


(NEDA, 2018)

## Resources

Within the past twelve years, mental health diagnoses and treatment among college students have increased, but around fifty percent of people who suffer from mental illness go untreated each year (National Alliance on Mental Illness, 2019). Every college campus

has resources for students suffering from mental illnesses, but the number one reason people do not receive help because they are unaware of campus resources (Gruttadaro D., 2012). Visit your college's website for various mental health services provided. In cases of emergency, there are several hotlines that can be called for information, resources, and support.



**MENTAL HEALTH HOTLINES**

- 1 SUBSTANCE ABUSE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES ADMINISTRATION (SAMHSA)  
1-800-662-4357**  
A free confidential treatment referral and information service hotline that is available 24/7 365 days a year.
- 2 NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE  
1-800-273-8255**  
Free, confidential support 24/7 365 days a year.
- 3 NATIONAL EATING DISORDER ASSOCIATION HELPLINE  
1-800-931-2237**  
Available Monday-Thursday 9 AM - 9 PM and Friday 9 AM - 5 PM. A message system is available after hours.
- 4 NATIONAL ALLIANCE ON MENTAL ILLNESS (NAMI)  
1-800-950-6264**  
A free nationwide service providing information, resources, and support. Available Monday - Friday 10 AM - 6 PM ET.
- 5 MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA (MHA)  
1-800-273-8255**  
Available 24/7 to reach a crisis hotline for resources and support.

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# Alcohol Use

## College Alcoholism

College is a significant time where students decide to experiment with alcohol the most. Nearly eighty percent of students have had alcohol to some extent. The desire to consume alcohol comes from the students newfound freedom. They become more exposed to alcohol as a college student due to college sports and other social gatherings. The students tend to start off as slow drinkers, but they begin to build a tolerance as they continue to drink more often. With an increased tolerance, students need a lot more alcohol to feel the same effects from the past. If a student begins to drink frequently, they become more prone to an alcohol use disorder. Alcohol use disorder can lead to different effects on the individual relating to the present or the future (Galbicsek, 2019) (Manarang-Obsioma, 2019).

## Alcohol Use Disorder

Alcohol Use Disorder can arise from many different factors. Genes, environment, physiological makeup can cause the disorder. It is estimated that 16 million Americans have an alcohol use disorder. Alcohol Use Disorder targets the brain as it is a chronic disease. Different signals can tell if someone might have an alcohol use disorder such as an uncontrollable urge to drink or the lack of control in the amount of alcohol consumption. Alcohol Use Disorder comes in different forms. The symptoms of alcohol use disorder can give a good idea on the severity of the problem. Some symptoms can include the need to drink to become social, drinking and driving, or drinking on the mind at all times. Alcohol Use Disorder have different effects, which can be short-term or long-term. A short-term effect is memory loss, while a long-term effect is cirrhosis. Alcohol Use Disorder also make individuals more susceptible to risky behaviors. The biggest risky behavior is the idea of drinking and driving (WebMD, 2018).

## ONE DRINK EQUALS

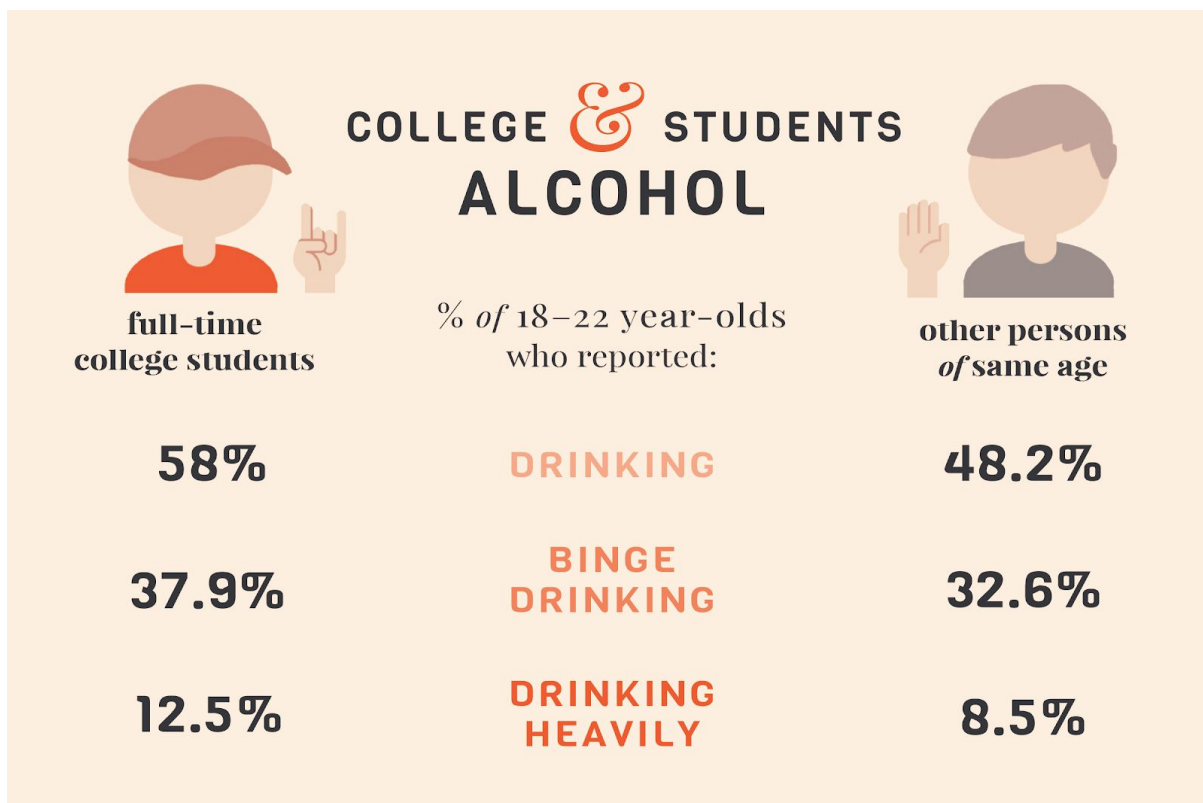
- **1.5 oz of liquor**
- **5 oz of wine**
- **12 oz of beer**

**(WebMD, 2018)**

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## Peer Pressure

Peer pressure is a significant contributor to alcohol use in college. College can be overwhelming for some students as they have need of “fitting in.” Peer pressure can be direct or indirect. An example of direct peer pressure can be the offering of a drink. The student can be convinced to drink alcoholic beverages if they are consistently encouraged to drink the offered drink. Indirect peer pressure is more from the observer perspective. Students will see that they are the only ones not drinking, so they will feel obligated to join everyone else. This brings back the idea of wanting to “fit in” with the crowd. Students want to grow on the social hierarchy ladder, so they can be considered “cool” to other people. The influence of social media can be considered peer pressure as well. Images and videos of friends want other students to engage in the same activities because they feel left out of the group. Social identity drives the idea of students wanting to engage in alcohol use and risky behaviors associated with it (Coleman, 2015) (Staff, 2019).



Source: <http://www.dailytexanonline.com/2017/02/14/ut-should-emphasize-cons-of-alcohol-abuse>

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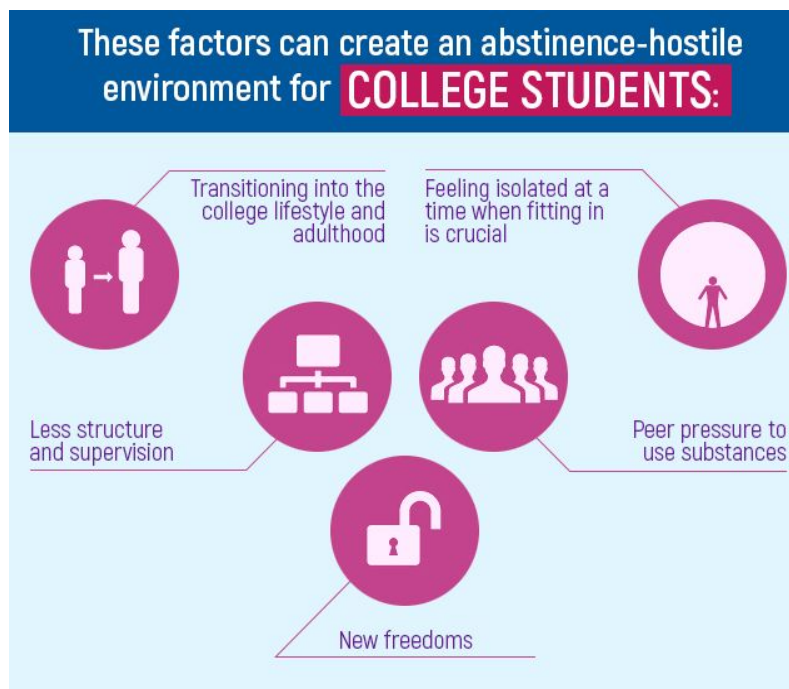
## Tips to control Peer Pressure

- Use parents as an excuse
- Establish healthy relationships with those who do not partake in such activities
- Keep yourself busy with other activities
- Ask for soda or juice instead
- Talk to your parents about the problem
- Understand the risks and dangers of underage drinking
- Develop a plan suited for you to combat the peer influences

(Staff, 2019)

## Binge Drinking

Binge Drinking is very common among college students. Binge drinking is an individual consuming an extreme amount of alcohol in a short time period. Men would have more than five drinks while women would have more than four drinks. College freshmen are susceptible to binge drinking in their first few weeks of their first college semester. Alcohol is considered to be a staple of the “college experience.” Hard liquor has become the preferred choice of alcohol in today’s day and age. Today, students decide to just get as drunk as possible, and they have no idea of the potential negative effects from it (Galbicsek, 2019).



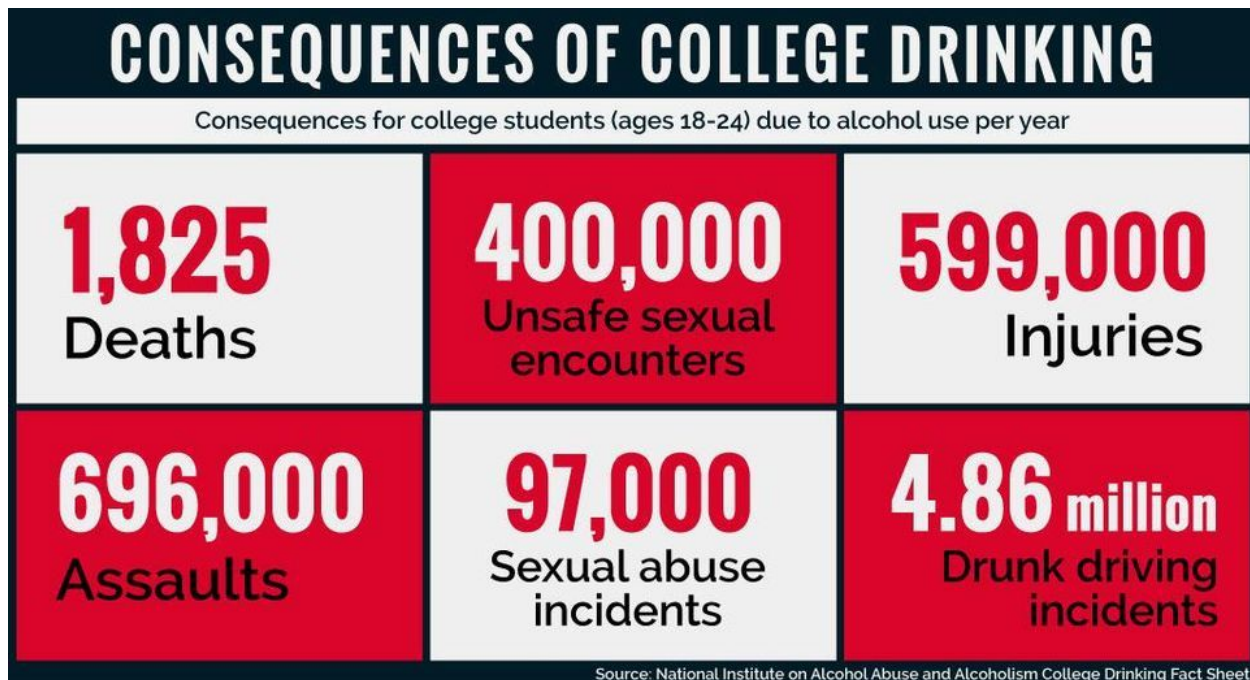
Source: <https://alcorehab.org/alcoholism/college-alcohol-abuse/>



## Negative Consequences of Underage Drinking

- Death
- Assault
- Sexual Assault
- Academic Problems
- Alcohol Use Disorder
- Health Problems
- Injuries
- Unsafe sex
- Violence
- Driving under the influence
- Suicide
- Criminal activities (i.e. vandalism)
- Personality Changes

(Alcoholism, 2019), (Galbicsek, 2019), (Manarang-Obisoma, 2019).



Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/jillcastellano/2015/06/22/social-media-is-the-new-battle-ground-for-college-binge-drinking/#154887a37dd4>



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## Impact on Coursework

College alcohol use has the ability to drastically change the lifestyle of college students. It can take a toll on students in unexpected ways. The most significant toll that it can take is the impact on coursework. The student comes to college, so they can get an education. Alcohol has the ability to steer the student away from their schoolwork. It will change many of the normal behaviors for a student.

- Skip class due to hangovers
- Poor studying habits
- Inability to get assignments done
- Failing exams
- Lowering of overall grades
- Improper handling of responsibilities

All of these are possible effects on a student that becomes consumed by the idea of drinking all of the time (Manarang-Obsioma, 2019).

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# Drug Use

## Drug Introduction

College offers the ability to try different drugs during parties and other social gatherings. The use of drugs can be considered a rite of passage to an extent. Students will use drugs to combat the pressures of college. The following are common drugs used by college students (Network, 2019) :

- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Heroin
- Ecstasy
- Prescription medications
- Over-the-counter drugs

College students are a significant number of consumers when it comes to different groups. They will use it for anxiety, personal freedom, partying, and plain old abuse. The use of drugs comes with risky behaviors such as driving under the influence or criminal activity. Drugs have the ability to change how one's brain works (Murray, 2019).

## Drug Addiction

Addiction is the inability to stop. It affects the brain the most. Drugs drown the brain with dopamine. The brain will want to constantly chase the same high from previous times. After taking the drug for so long, the tolerance on the brain will increase. This will lead to more use of the drug, so the individual can feel the same high. The drugs can impact the systems inside the brain relating to judgement, decision making, memory, and learning ability (WebMD, 2018).

## Warning Signs

- An urge to use multiple times a day
- Having the drug constantly on you

- Impacting personal life
- Risky behaviors
- Personal maintenance

(Network, 2019) (WebMD, 2018)



Source: <https://windwardway.com/college-students/>

## Marijuana Use

Marijuana is the most common drug on college campuses. When it comes to substance use, it is number two right after alcohol. Almost half of college students have tried marijuana. The drug is advertised all across social media where teenagers spend a lot of their time. Marijuana is usually smoked, but it comes in other forms as well such as brownies, candies, or other edibles. It gives a euphoric feeling to one's body, which is why it is used so often. The drug has many of the same effects that alcohol does, which is why they share common purposes among college students (Network, 2019).

Marijuana does have side effects on an individual (Murray, 2019) (Network, 2019).

|                      |                       |                       |                                 |
|----------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Loss of coordination | Lowered immune system | Poor memory functions | Slowed reaction times           |
| Increases heart rate | Respiratory issues    | Lack of motivation    | Higher chance of risky behavior |

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Students can also be potentially exposed to synthetic marijuana. Synthetic marijuana can be more harmful than normal marijuana as it has chemicals blended with it. Synthetic marijuana use is actually more prevalent among college students with ten percent of college students using it regularly (Murray, 2019).

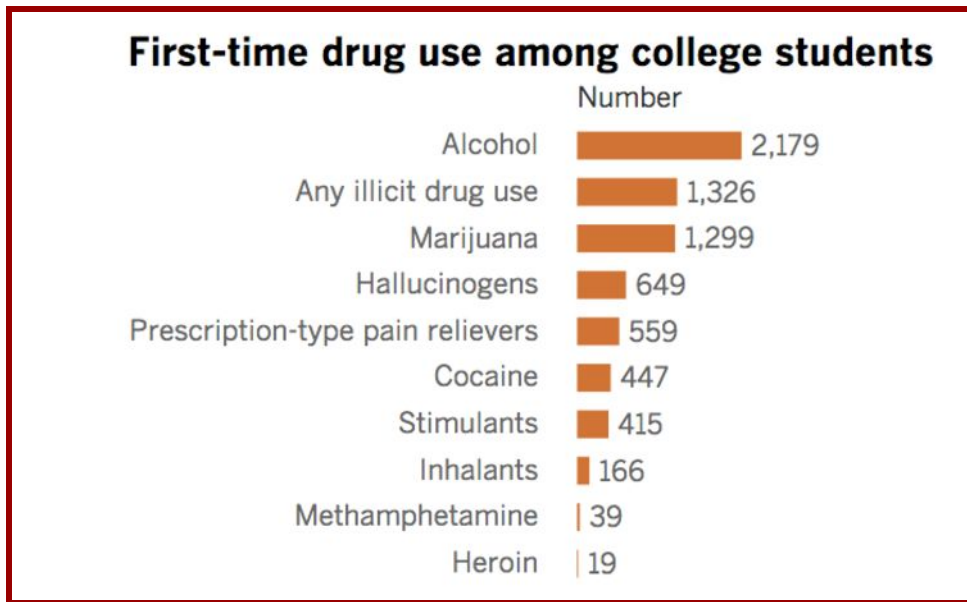
### **Marijuana Abuse**

The abuse of marijuana by college students has grown since the twentieth century by almost one percent. One in every twenty-two students use marijuana routinely. It is very prevalent among college campuses, and it will be used for different occasions among students (Murray, 2019).

### **Marijuana Risks**

- Lowered school performance
- Weight gain
- Hallucinations
- Paranoia
- Seizures
- Kidney damage

(Murray, 2019)



Source: <https://www.freshu.io/taylor-lang/a-new-study-shows-how-prevalent-drugs-and-alcohol-are-in-college>

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## Other Drugs

Stimulants are another form of drug that is commonly used among college students. Stimulants enhance the abilities of the brain (Murray, 2019).

### Prescription Drugs

Adderall, Concerta, Ritalin are common stimulants among college students because they help students focus on studying. These are prescription drugs, but prescribed students decide to sell these drugs to students in need of the drug. Adderall is most used among college students. The use of these drugs can be explained by the constant pressure of school because everyone wants to exceed the expectation. College students will also use narcotic painkillers or depressants such as Valium or Xanax (Murray, 2019) (Network, 2019).

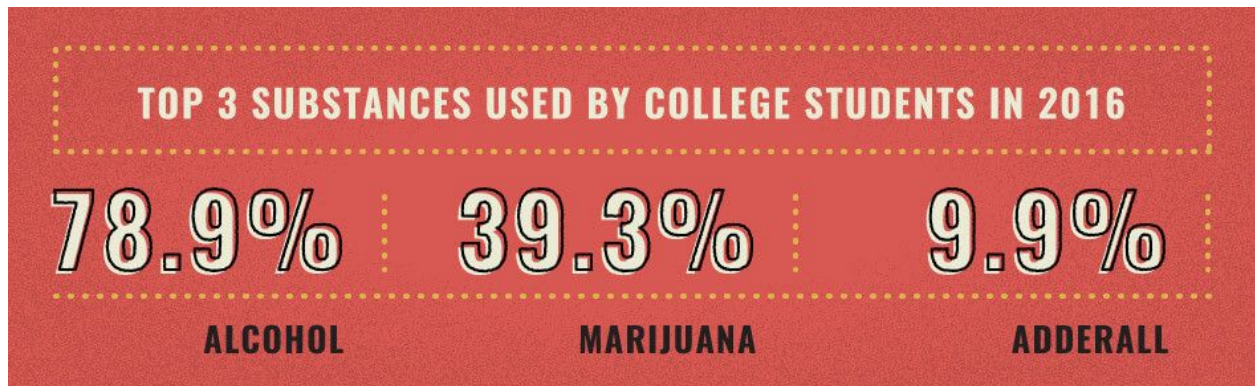
### Illicit Drugs

Cocaine rates in college have also increased among students. Many other drugs have the ability to cause hallucinations as well as change mood. All drugs have side effects along with its associated risk factors. Ecstasy increases pleasure while cocaine or heroin increase the heart rate or blood pressure (Murray, 2019) (Network, 2019).

## Consequences of Use

- Risky behavior
- Aggressive behavior
- Spending too much
- Experimentation with other drugs
- Increased use
- Cravings
- Health problems
- Relationship problems among friends and family

(Murray, 2019)



Source: <https://www.dualdiagnosis.org/drug-addiction/college-drug-abuse/>

## Treatment Help

### **SAMHSA Helpline: 1-800-662-HELP (4357)**

- Free, confidential, 24/7 for treatment referral and information for individuals with mental or substance use problems

**Contact a rehabilitation center**

**Contact doctor**

**(Administration, 2019)**

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# Sexual Health

## The Basics

**You have the power to choose what you want to do with your body!**

If you're ready to be sexually active but not ready to have a baby, here are some options to consider and/or discuss with your doctor.

### Basic Birth Control

1. Male and female condoms
2. Birth control pills
3. Vaginal rings
4. Injections
5. Patches
6. Implants
7. Intrauterine devices (IUDs)
8. Morning after pill

(Mayo Clinic Staff, 2018a)

\*birth controls need to be used consistently and correctly to prevent pregnancy\*

### Consent- "permission for something to happen or agreement to do something"

Consent is 100% required to have any sexual encounter with anyone no matter their gender.

| Consent   | NOT consent   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Communicating the entire time</li><li>- No means no</li><li>- Asking before every sexual encounter with someone</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- "No"</li><li>- Yes if they are under the influence of drugs or alcohol</li><li>- Revealing clothing</li></ul> |

(Loveisrespect, 2017)

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# Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs)

## What are STDs and why should you care?

Sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) are illnesses you can get from having sexual contact with someone which includes anal and oral sex. They are spread through bodily fluids like semen and blood or by coming into contact with sores from an infected person.

Unfortunately, while some STDs have noticeable symptoms, some don't which can lead to serious medical issues down the road. It is important to know how to protect yourself from these diseases/infections and know how to catch them (Girls health, 2015).

## Top 3 STDs

1. Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
2. Chlamydia
3. Gonorrhea

## Signs you should get tested

| females   | both   | males   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Pain during sexual intercourse</li><li>- Bleeding between periods</li><li>- Bleeding with intercourse</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- You're sexually active</li><li>- Painful or burning sensation when urinating</li><li>- Unusual/ Thick, cloudy or bloody discharge from genitals</li><li>- Small red bumps or blisters in or around genitals</li><li>- Pain or itching in genital areas</li><li>- Genital warts</li><li>- Fatigue</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Testicular pain</li><li>- Swollen testicles</li></ul> <p>(Mayo Clinic Staff, 2018b)</p> |

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## Getting Tested

If you are sexually active you need to get regular STD testing.

Only 11.6% of 15-24 year olds have reported getting STD tested in the past 12 months, but there are 10 million new cases of STDs in this same age groups meaning there are millions of people out in the world unaware of the fact they are infected and infecting other people (Cuffe, et al, 2016)(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2013)..

The top reasons college students don't get tested are...

1. **Confidentiality:** students don't want their parents to know they are getting STD tested which can be an issue when still under their insurance, on campus clinics provide cheap tests and confidentiality so that no one has to know but you.
2. **Fear of asking/ the doctor not offering:** you must advocate for yourself, your doctor doesn't know your personal life/ doesn't care, they just want you to be safe, they want you to ask!
3. **Finances:** public community health departments and clinics offer cheap or free STD testing in their offices and college campuses often have free HIV testing on campuses (Cuffe, et al, 2016).

## What do STD tests look like and where can I get one?

When you get tested it is either a blood, urine or fluid sample. It is quick and easy.

Any of the following places offer full STD testing but you can call or check online before going if you have concerns about finances or confidentiality.

- Your University health center
- Community health department
- Private doctor
- Planned Parenthood

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## I tested positive, now what?

1. Treatment, most STDs can be treated with antibiotics or antivirals
2. Get tested again after treatment to make sure it has cleared
3. Notify all sexual partners from the last 6 months (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2019)

Notifying partners is scary but 100% vital!

## Preventing STDs

Normal birth control, like the pill, cannot prevent sexually transmitted diseases, just pregnancies. Barrier methods and abstinence are the best choice to protect yourself from STDs. Abstinence, not having sex, is the only way to 100% guarantee you won't get an STD but there are some other good options to significantly lower your risk.

- **External Condoms: used for vaginal, oral and anal sex**
- **Internal Condoms: used for vaginal and anal sex**
- **Dental Dams: used for oral sex**

\*they must be used every time\*

These are called barrier methods because they create a barrier between you and your partner's bodily fluids reducing your risk of getting an STD (Planned parenthood, 2019).

### Tips for condom and dental dam use:

1. Store them in a cool, dry place
2. Use latex or polyurethane
3. Put condom or dental dam on before sex
4. Check expiration date
5. Check for damages
6. Do not reuse condoms or dental dams
7. Do not use male and female condoms together, pick one (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2016a)

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# Resources

## **University Health Centers**

Ex. The University of Georgia Health Center offers

- Free condoms
- Birth control

## **Local Health Department**

Ex. Athens-Clarke county health department offers

- Birth control
- Health exams
- STD/STI testing and treatment
- Condoms

All costs are income based or free.

## **Planned Parenthood**

Can make an appointment or call their hotline they offer objective information to help you make informed decisions and ask questions to a confidential source.

**Sexual Health Hotline: 617.616.1616**

**Sexual Assault Hotline: 800.656.HOPE (4673)**

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