

Mention the **"E"** word and all sorts of Excuses fly. ***We're talking Exercise.*** Why bother? It means taking another shower, accumulating more laundry and perhaps missing out on a rousing card game. Balance this: regular exercise can help relieve stress, increase your energy level, make you feel better about your body...and even help you to sleep better at night. But it's hard to imagine that when you are comfortably sitting on the bed watching your favorite reality TV show.

Exercising is one part of the equation in weight management. Moving your body can help you achieve and maintain a reasonable weight. When you exercise regularly, you will be burning extra calories, building muscle and decreasing excess body fat. The more muscle you have, the stronger you will be and the more fit you will look.

It is recommended that you get at least **30 minutes of moderate exercise 3-5 days a week**. Going to the gym, taking a yoga class and biking around campus all make the grade when it comes to exercise. If 30 minutes seems like a lot to do, break it up into two 15-minute sessions. Be sure you choose activities that feel good and that you enjoy.

Already active? If you are a competitive athlete, a weekend sports warrior or someone who simply works out to stay in shape, knowing what and when to eat and drink will make a difference in how you feel and how you perform. The basic diet for an athlete is essentially the same as the basic diet for a non-athlete. The difference is that athletes need more of everything...more calories, more protein, more vitamins, more minerals and more fluid. For seasoned athletes, timing of meals and fluids can make a difference in how you feel and how you perform. (For more on eating to compete, please see *Eating Well on Campus* or consult sports nutrition guidebooks such as *Fuel for Young Athletes* by Ann Litt: Human Kinetics, 2004), *Nancy Clark's Sports Nutrition Book*, Human Kinetics, 2003 or *Power Eating: Build Muscle, Boost Energy, Cut Fat* by Susan Kleiner, Human Kinetics, 2001)

Did you know that you can exercise too much? "Exercise bulimia" is a sometimes overlooked and serious eating disorder. If you find that you are frequently skipping class or time with friends in order to exercise, if you are constantly calculating the calories you burn for the food you eat or if your exercise "habit" interferes with your ability to relax, prevents you from participating in normal college life or requires a long period of time at the gym everyday, you might want to explore your exercise dependence. For more information on exercise bulimia, check out www.somethingfishy.com or www.edap.org.

Make the most of your active time. Ask a friend to exercise with you or relax with music and a headset. The more regularly you exercise, the better you will feel.

exercise