

Students scope health scene of campus cuisine

By Teresa Weaver
THE BATTALION

Limited options mean healthy eating in college may be hard, but not impossible

Although the first impression of on-campus dining may be filled with images of students gorging themselves in the all-you-can-eat Sbisa Dining Hall, healthy eating habits can be found at numerous places around campus.

Despite this, Sam Kuhr, a senior marketing major, said many students don't take advantage of healthy alternatives.

"Most people don't put any thought into healthy eating choices," Kuhr said. "People order what tastes good to them, and they don't think about the nutritional value of things."

Kuhr has been a student worker at Rumours Deli in the Memorial Student Center for the past three years. Rumours provides sandwiches, wraps and other meals to students and is one of numerous locations run by A&M's the Department of Food Services.

Kuhr said that, as a freshman, he used to sit in Sbisa for hours, getting one serving after another to get his money's worth.

"You sit with your friends and go back for more and more and by the time you're done, you've had two or three meals," Kuhr said. "You really have to be aware of the portions you eat and stay away from the fried foods that have no nutritional value."

Kendra Wetterling, a junior marketing major and resident adviser for Schumacher Hall, said she also tries to eat healthy meals while living on campus.

"If you put an effort into eating a healthy meal, you can do it," Wetterling said.

Wetterling said she visits the farmers' markets located near campus on South College Road to get fresh fruit and vegetables.

Wetterling said she has seen students come up with creative dishes using only the microwave.

"You can bake a cake, cook turkey and do pretty much anything you want with a microwave," Wetterling said. "One of my resi-

dents tried to steam broccoli one time, though, and that reeked."

Cynthia Zawieja, associate director of Food Services and a dietician, said she observes the eating habits of students on campus. She said students commonly eat the same thing for every meal.

"You limit yourself with the lack of nutrients you are receiving," Zawieja said.

"Good eating habits are based on eating a variety of foods from all the food groups."

She said other eating habits that prevent students from a well-balanced diet are snacking during the day and especially late at night, as well as drinking excessive amounts of soda and alcohol, both of which are sources of empty calories.

Zawieja said the nutritional value of the food available on campus is accessible on the Food Services Web site, <http://food.tamu.edu>. When looking at Today's Menu, click on the apple icon to receive information on specific dishes. She said the Web site lists ingredients for each dish as well as information such as the fat content and calorie count per serving.

Zawieja said this new feature will help students find healthier meals on campus.

Sophomore animal science major Lana Chumney said she eats healthy meals by limiting her meal plan. She only eats five on-campus meals per week, reducing her fast food.



Junior physics major Michael Donovan serves himself food at Sbisa dining hall Tuesday evening. Donovan lives on campus and frequently visits Sbisa for lunch and dinner.

"I go to the sandwich shops instead of fast food places," said Chumney. "It's kind of hard to eat healthy on campus. I love Sbisa cookies, but they're probably the worst for you."

DJ Curtis, a junior general studies major who lives off campus has an on-campus meal plan. Using one meal per day, Curtis avoids greasy, fatty foods and tends to eat foods such as sandwiches, salads and pasta at Alontii in the Underground Food Court.

"On-campus food is healthy sometimes," Curtis said. "It depends on where you go. If students go to Sbisa or Duncan, (they) can choose what they eat and that helps."

Kuhr agrees that although there are healthy alternatives for students, most do not want to put much thought into what they eat.

"People don't realize that when you leave off the lettuce and tomatoes

on sandwiches, you are cutting down on part of the healthy aspect of the meal," Kuhr said. "By leaving off mayonnaise or taking a piece of fruit instead of cookies, students can have better eating habits."

Despite the plethora of healthy food options that lie next to the cookies and chips, Aggies are choosing what tastes good.

"We try to push more nutrition," Zawieja said, "but when we put it out there, students don't want it."

Zawieja agrees that for students to eat healthy, they have to make the effort to eat the right food and avoid unhealthy alternatives.

"Putting sour cream and guacamole on your taco salad only adds calories to your diet," Zawieja said. "When people use two packets of dressing on top of a salad, they might as well eat a regular meal."

WHAT ARE WE EATING?

Here's a sample of what was on our plates for the 2003-2004 school year at all on-campus dining facilities.

French Fries	146,300 lbs.
Hamburgers	114,140 lbs.
Chicken Breast	89,000 lbs.
Heads of Lettuce	85,190 lbs.
Chicken Strips	67,150 lbs.
Mashed Potatoes	25,000 lbs.
Low-fat Ranch Dressing Packages	17,035 lbs.
Frozen Spinach	8,964 lbs.
	137,519 apples
	81,332 bananas
	78,672 oranges
	13,488 honeydew melons

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