

DRINK, DRUGS & SAUSAGE ROLLS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMME



In association with

Squareball



www.ulster.gaa.ie

GAA

Drink



Ah yes, life on the beer as a student. So many bars and so little time. Here's our guide to having a great time but minimising your chances of:

getting your stomach pumped / getting a good kicking / getting arrested / getting pregnant / catching a disease you didn't want / suffering blinding hangovers / developing a humungous beer gut and / or bingo wings and a big arse / wasting loads of cash.

Alcohol...the effects

Alcohol enters your blood more or less straight away and immediately effects your brain. The more you drink - the stranger the things you think, say and do and if you don't believe it stay sober some night and watch your friends. The more you drink the more functions are affected such as slurred speech, loss of co-ordination, arguments, memory loss, vomiting etc. Like all things, in moderation, drink is fine. Problem is - most students don't do moderation too well. Here's our guide for safer drinking:

Adult Drinking Guidelines

Many students tend to drink the majority of their units over one or two nights and it's this type of drinking that can be most damaging to health. Are you drinking too much on one night? Check your units....

- Men: up to 21 units per week/ 4 per day

- Women up to 14 units per week/ 3 per day.

Small glass of wine (125ml) - 1½ units
 Pint of beer/cider - 2 units
 Bottle of beer - 1½ units
 Spirits (35ml) - 1½ units
 Alcopop - 1½ units

Watch your drink ... Spiking

Fact: someone may spike your drink so they can rape or sexually assault you, give you a good kicking or rob you. Basically, you become easy prey for someone to do whatever they want with you. Spiking can happen anytime, anyplace, anywhere there is drink so wherever you are, watch your drink.



Symptoms may include:

- Drowsiness or dizziness
- Feeling disorientated
- Nausea or vomiting
- Loss of memory
- Hallucinations
- Difficulty talking or walking

Staying Safe

- Watch it being poured and don't leave it unattended.
- Don't accept drink from people you don't know. You never know what they might have in mind for you later.
- Don't drink out of containers like punch bowls - the contents are usually minglin'
- Keep your hand over the top of your drink when not drinking. Obviously remove it when you are drinking....
- If your drink has been moved, tastes different or there is more of it, don't drink it.

Have a good night ... without the regrets!

How often does a good night's crack end up with you or one of your mates getting totally wrote off - everyone's night ruined because someone is blootered and a total mess? Here's a few helpful hints if you are going out:

- Eat something before you go out. It will slow down the speed at which alcohol enters your bloodstream.
- Drink water to avoid dehydration and reduce your hangover.
- Don't eat crisps, peanuts or other salty things - they will make you thirsty.
- Switch to lower strength alcoholic drinks - stronger drinks can result in a messier night and a severe hangover
- Don't drink spirits neat. No-one drinks whisky like John Wayne did in the movies.
- Do not binge drink - drinking too much on one night is damaging to your health.
- Drinking in rounds can be expensive. Stick to your own pace! Ignore the slugging.



A Word of Warning!

Look after yourself and your friends when you go out - people who are pissed are easy prey for people looking for a row or worse. Never leave yourself vulnerable to dangerous situations when you are out. Always let friends know where you are going, who you are with and when you expect to return. If your plans change, let someone know, don't do a sleepover without telling someone where you are. Plan your journey home, book a taxi in advance or store the number of a reliable firm in your phone. Do not use unlicensed taxis and **NEVER WALK HOME ALONE.**

M O V E



Is your Sofa Creaking Under the Strain?

Now that you've arrived to student life, the days of compulsory PE lessons are over! Now you can limit your exercise to walking from the sofa to the front door to collect your delivery pizza. Eat it, sit on your ass and watch Neighbours. Sleep and then a carry out before another night out. What a life. Develop the nocturnal habits of a sloth by all means but if you follow this routine you're well on your way to putting on the average one stone in extra weight that students add in their first year. What an ass you'll have - it'll look like two binbags full of water in a pair of jeans. Yep - physical activity is important if you are to remain healthy - especially if you sit about, drink and eat crap. Physical exercise can also help stimulate your mind believe it or not!

Step One - Getting started - off the sofa and onto your feet

If you try to do too much too soon you are likely to cause yourself an injury or at the very least leave yourself feeling very sore! It's best to start slowly and gradually increase the length and level at which you are working. You won't get fit or see dramatic changes overnight but it will happen. It may take a day or two before you can see your feet again but keep at it.

Step Two - Don't overdo it and hold off on the gym membership

If you just want to get healthy you should

aim to accumulate 30 minutes of physical activity each day (ie in bouts of 10 or 15 minutes). You should be doing something which raises your heart rate but doesn't leave you too breathless!

If you want to improve your fitness levels, tone up or lose weight, aim to take part in reasonably vigorous activity lasting at least 20 minutes, 3 times a week. This means that the activity should leave you out of breath and be carried out for a longer period of time. There are fun ways you can do this with friends...

Some suggestions to get you moving!



- Take the stairs rather than the lift - stair climbing is great for burning calories
- Join a gym - bring along a friend and you can motivate each other
- Take a class - choose something you enjoy and will stick at
- Join a team - it's a great way to meet new people as well as getting fit
- Buy an exercise DVD
- Do sit ups, squats, lunges and press-ups at home

Exercise uses up calories that would otherwise be stored as fat. Everything you eat contains calories and everything you do uses up calories, including sitting at rest and digesting food! So any activity which you do in addition to what you do normally will use extra calories.

Think that's an excuse?

There may be many reasons as to why you aren't currently taking exercise, but are these just excuses?

- **Time** - Schedule time for exercise between or after classes, or substitute some of your tv time for exercise.
- **Money** - Many fitness centres offer reduced membership for students, joining a team is free and it costs nothing to go for a walk!

- **Boredom** - Most gyms offer a wide range of classes for all interests - from circuits to salsa classes so have a look around until you find something you will enjoy. Exercise to your favourite music or bring a friend along to make it a social occasion.



- **Pain** - Listen to what your body is telling you and if it hurts - STOP! Starting slowly and increase your levels gradually
- **Embarrassment** - Exercise may feel intimidating at first but don't let this put you off. Other people in gyms are there to get fit, not to look at you! But if you really can't shake off the feeling, there are lots of exercises you can do at home where no one will see you!
- **Tiredness** - Exercise actually gives you more energy and will help you sleep better at night - both of which should help ease your tiredness.

Don't let your good intentions put you in danger ... If you are jogging, cycling or walking regularly, try to vary your route and the time that you exercise. Always stick to well-lit roads, main paths or open spaces where you can be seen. Let someone know where you are going and what time you're expected back and if possible keep your mobile phone on you. You can always use it to have the pizza delivered and waiting for you when you get home...

eat



The Average Student is made up of 7% Kebab Meat*

If you're new to student life, you're probably used having yer ma, big sister or some other sucker cooking for you. Well, now it's time to introduce yourself to the delights of cooking without poisoning yourself. This guide will help you eat healthily on a budget, and avoid some of the pitfalls – like eating beans for every meal which can be a real problem for your housemates and seriously increase your greenhouse gas emissions. [Fact: Students on average put on over a stone in weight in their first year due to poor eating, sitting on their ass and drinking]

*Squareball research

Healthy Eating

If you eat properly you should remain in a reasonably healthy state and not suffer from scurvy or any other ailment that will severely curb your social life. A poor diet can lead to weight gain and weight loss – imagine from supermodel thin to sumo fat – add sickness, skin and hair problems and reduced mental capacity.

Follow these few simple rules for healthy eating:

- Eat 5 portions of fruit and vegetables each day
- Base each of your meals on carbohydrates
- Limit sugary, fatty and fried foods
- Eat lean cuts of protein
- Eat regular meals and don't skip breakfast

Eating well on a budget

Students' diets are dictated by their ability to cook, how lazy you are and how much you are prepared to spend. There are many ways to stretch your money so it will go farther on food –

- Budget – decide upon how much you are going to spend each week and stick to this.
- Plan your menus and only buy what you need.
- Take advantage of special offers in supermarkets.
- Use supermarket own brand products – these are much cheaper and are often just as good.



- Discount shelves – these usually contain great bargains
- Cook for yourself and avoid ready made foods that include the cost of someone else having to make them!

Exam Time

Healthy eating is important if you are under stress and particularly at exam time. You need to eat foods that will fill you up and offer nutritional value both for your body and mind!

- Eat breakfast – it will keep you mentally alert
- Eat regular meals – going hungry will ruin your concentration and cause energy slumps
- Eat enough iron to prevent you feeling tired (eg red meat, green vegetables, fortified cereals, bread)
- Drink water to avoid headaches, tiredness and dehydration

- Use mealtimes as a break from study and take time to catch up with friends over lunch or dinner
- Ready made meals will save you time but ensure they are low in salt and fat and will provide you with enough to satisfy your hunger.
- Stock up on healthy snacks and eat plenty of energy rich foods between meals.

Freshers 15 – The Weight Gain, Aaagghhh!!

While weight gain is not inevitable, you will not be happy to learn that the average weight gain for freshers is fifteen pounds – yes that's more than a stone of lard deposited on your ass, gut, chest (male and female)! Here are the culprits...

- Late night take aways – after a night on the beer, chip shops, kebab houses and burger vans seem appealing. The food is tasty and it may be your last chance saloon. Have you ever tasted a kebab when you're sober?
- High calorie fluids – alcohol and fizzy drinks contain many empty calories and these tend to be stored in the body as fat.
- Skipping meals – disrupts your metabolism and causes overeating later in the day. Eat three main meals each day with healthy snacks in between.
- Study snacking – high calorie snacks eaten during study can cause weight gain.
- Canteens/dining halls – the choice, portion size and price of food available in student dining halls make eating there appear attractive.
- Lack of exercise – eating more calories than you use up will cause weight gain. Try to include a brisk walk for 20 minutes each day.



STRESS



Pressures of Student Life

For the first time in your life you are probably free to do whatever you want and it's great. Student life for all its great opportunities can bring its pressures – your money or lack of, boyfriend/girlfriend or lack of, study or exam stress, noisy neighbours, crap accommodation, pressures at home, health – it can be anything at all. Even the best of us can get stressed out or feel the pressure – you need to remember to expect this from time to time and more importantly understand how to deal with it and do something about it! Remember, – dead fish go with the flow.

New Relationships

Picture the scene... your eyes meet across the bar, he or she is the most attractive thing you have ever seen and you're starting to ache with desire.... The problem is as soon as you get it together you realise you're about as compatible as Cork and Meath c1989.

It may sound obvious but there's no point being in a relationship when you are constantly unhappy, fighting or not communicating. Relationships can be good, bad or ugly – and can easily do your head in. Getting dumped or giving someone the boot can be tough, especially if you're on the receiving end! It's only natural to be upset for a while but if this starts affecting your life then you need to kick ass - get back out there and start living again.

Accommodation

If you're living in shared accommodation the following tips may help to keep you all sane!

- Devise a cleaning rota for the communal areas in the house such as bathroom, kitchen & living room
- Discuss who's name goes on what bill, or agree to put all names on them so that there's joint responsibility in paying them
- If you're having a visitor stay over clear it with the rest of the house first.
- If there is a problem deal with it – don't bitch about it

Studies

Unfortunately it's a fact of student life

that you have to go to lectures, do assignments and revise.

The best way to manage the stress of studies is to manage your time – know your deadlines and aim to meet them well in advance. If you feel out of your depth, are wondering whether you're in the right course or other problems are affecting your ability to complete your studies, speak to a studies advisor or tutor immediately. Don't let the problems mount until you feel helpless.

Money (or lack of it!)

Student life is certain to place more demands on your finances than you've ever known! Even with loans, grants, bursaries, part-time work and help from parents most students find life can be a financial struggle. Spending money wisely and making the money you've got go farther should help along the way:

- Find a bank with a student account which will suit you – ensure that overdraft limits, charges and services match your needs
- Don't go mad with your loan, grant or bursary – you may feel flush for a few weeks but you'll be amazed how quickly it goes
- Look for student discounts in shops
- Avoid, or at least be cautious of credit and store cards – you really don't need the debt and they will show no mercy if you default on payments
- Lower electric bills by washing clothes at a lower temperature, unplugging unused appliances and turning the TV off. Do wash your clothes tho! Being

smelly is false economy!

- Shop around for fuel, costs can vary! And, save £30 a year by turning the heat down by 1 degree.

Top tips to avoid stress

- Don't put things off – mark your due dates for assignments or exams in a diary or your phone and work towards them.
- Don't let problems get out of control – don't ignore the problem and hope it goes away – ask for help!
- Don't demand too much of yourself – setting goals is fine but don't put extra pressure on yourself by demanding too much.
- Don't waste energy on worry – worrying won't change things. Talk through your concerns, a problem shared can be a problem halved.
- Keep active – taking exercise can really help take your mind off things and reduce stress levels.
- Drink in moderation – relying on alcohol as a way of releasing stress is unhealthy and will only cause you problems in the long term.
- Eat a balanced diet – to keep your body and mind in good health.
- Relax – take time out to do the things you enjoy





Jimi Hendrix may have been a great hurler if he lived in Ireland – he was also a drug user and that's what killed him. The excitement and freedom of living the student life may lead you to experiment with drugs. There are obvious health and legal implications with this so it's best to know the facts before you turn on, tune in and maybe drop dead. Drug use can never be 100 per cent safe and the dangers depend on the drug, the user and the environment you use it in. **BIG Warning:** You are risking your course, your career, your friends and family and in some cases, you're risking your life. You may also end up meeting some very dodgy people if you develop any sort of habit.

Drugs and their Effects

Since all drugs are different, there are different dangers associated with each of them. The more often a drug is taken, the greater the risks to your health. Psychological effects range from paranoia to long term mental ill-health, while physical effects range from raised blood pressure, through to collapse, coma and in cases of accidental overdose or long term abuse, death. Other side effects can include personal hygiene problems, incontinence and other unattractive symptoms best not discussed!

Depressants (such as alcohol, heroin and tranquilisers) have a sedative effect which slows down the way the body and brain function, numbing pain and inducing

drowsiness if too much is taken. They can lead to physical dependence or to fatal overdose. Choking on your own vomit isn't a good way to end a night out.

Stimulants (such as amphetamine, cocaine, crack and ecstasy) give a rush of energy, increasing heart rate and making people more alert. Stimulant drugs can produce anxiety or panic attacks particularly if taken in large quantities and long term use can lead to heart failure. I'm sure you can think of better ways to get your heart rate up!

Hallucinogens (such as LSD and magic mushrooms and to a lesser extent cannabis and ecstasy) alter the way the user feels, sees, hears, tastes or smells. Hallucinogenic drugs can produce very disturbing experiences and may lead to

erratic or dangerous behaviour by the user. You will hear highly entertaining stories of people tripping – they're usually rubbish.

Social Effects

It's not only your health that suffers. Relationships (with partners, friends or family) often break down, academic courses or careers suffer, reputations can be ruined and before long the life you are living could be unrecognizable to what it was before.

Worried? What to look out for...

If you are concerned about a friend who you suspect may be using drugs, there are a few things you can look out for.

Behavioural Signs:

- Sudden mood swings
- Change of friends
- Loss of interest (in friends, college work, hobbies etc)
- Lack of concentration
- Deceitful behaviour (lying or stealing)

Physical Signs

- Weight loss / loss of appetite
- Drowsiness
- Unexplained bruises / needle marks

Talk to your friend about your concerns and if either of you need further support seek help from student services or your student advice centre. These support services offer trained counsellors and advisors who can offer any information support or assistance required.

How to React

The following is the best practice if someone is in difficulty as a result of taking drugs, legal or illegal (Source: Health Promotion Agency NI)

- Find out what has been taken - it will help the ambulance crew.
- If the person has taken a depressant drug (e.g. solvents, alcohol, sleeping pills, painkillers) they may be drowsy or unconscious.
- If the person is drowsy, try to keep them awake, by getting them to walk, (if possible), talking to them, or applying a cool damp cloth or towel to the back of their neck.
- Do not give them anything to eat or drink as this could lead to vomiting or choking.
- If they are or become unconscious, put them into the recovery position, clear airway if blocked, loosen clothing and call for an ambulance immediately. Keep checking on any changes to pulse and breathing rates.



DRINK, DRUGS & SAUSAGE ROLLS

HEALTH AND WELLNESS PROGRAMME



Lairdesign

Ulster Council GAA

8-10 Market Street, Armagh, BT61 7BX

T: (028) 3752 1900 F: (028) 3752 8092

E: info.ulster@gaa.ie W: www.ulster.gaa.ie

In association with

www.**squareball**.com

It's all good craic til
someone gets hurt...

