

## **UPDATED Idea: Does the Freshman 15 actually exist or is it just a myth?**

Going into college as a freshman, everyone warns you about the freshman 15 and how unavoidable it is. People that are very aware and cautious of what they eat are definitely the ones that fear this the most. Personally, I like to watch what I eat and workout. I thought about this and made a plan/promise to myself that I would keep working out and eating healthy so I wouldn't get it. Then to my surprise, I didn't even have to try and make an effort to avoid it because I found myself not even having time to eat anymore and if I did eat, it was maybe a meal a day. Both my roommate and I found ourselves having lost weight instead of gaining and made us think, "Does the freshman 15 even exist?". To answer my own question, I think it definitely does to some extent, especially for people who find themselves often feeling stressed out, not being mindful of what they're eating, or just going out a lot and drinking every weekend- but I also think there's a possibility it doesn't and just depends on the type of person you are.

### **Evidence Ideas:**

I've gathered some quotes from people here, and even at few other universities but just by talking to them I've been getting the same responses. So far I've gathered quotes from people who haven't experienced it themselves, but can see how it's possible to get it. I would now like to get quotes from people who have gotten the freshman 15 and what their take on it is/what caused them to gain the weight. I've found and gotten some quotes from online sources that have helped so far but I definitely want to do more

research on how people gain the weight, whether it's food or alcohol, and why it starts in college.

Quotes:

“The freshman 15 is not a thing for me because I live in bromley and the food there sucks.” -Caroline Coyle, Freshman at UIUC

“I think that it's a myth because if I wasn't in baseball, I wouldn't have gained a pound. I have to force myself to eat a bunch to gain weight. And plus I'm lifting so that's also why.” - Alex O'Malley, Freshman at IIT

“ I don't think it exists. I think that you have to not be aware of your stress levels, your sleeping habits, and your drinking in order to gain weight. If you're not aware of that, then you'll gain weight.” - Raiya Browning, Freshman at UIUC

“It exists, it just doesn't exist for me. I'm so focused on school that I never have time to eat and when I do get hungry, it's usually around breakfast or dinner. Like a lot of my classes are 11-3pm so I just don't eat lunch.” -Andre Adalin, Freshman at UIUC

“I think a lot is determined by your previous eating habits, self control, intentions, and how good the food actually is. Personally, I think I've lost weight because of an increase

in physical activity but also because the food here isn't very good therefore, I don't eat as much." - Marlowe Bangeman, Freshman at DePaul University

### Online Sources

- "But do most freshmen really gain 15 pounds during their first year? Research tells us no. Several studies have looked at the freshman 15 phenomenon and found that while weight gain is common during freshman year, 15 pounds is more than the average. The actual weight gain of freshmen varies greatly among different studies, with an overall average of 7 1/2 pounds. A meta-analysis of studies examining the freshman 15 phenomenon found that although nearly two-thirds of students gain weight as freshmen, fewer than 10 percent gain 15 pounds or more." (Chicago Tribune)
- "I'll start by saying: It doesn't matter how little you think you eat — if there is more food available to you, you *are* going to eat it. There were plenty of meals where I wasn't necessarily hungry, but I would eat at least one dessert just because they were there, and when else in my life would I have access to unlimited sweets? It also didn't help that my dorm was about a two-minute walk from the convenience store — which really, by the way, is not any more exciting than your average supermarket. But when you're in complete control of what you can buy, it can seem as exciting as like, Candy Land or something. Especially when you're up all night trying to finish an assignment and need to motivate yourself with food. And, getting exercise wasn't nearly as easy as I thought it

would be. In high school I got exercise almost every day, where in college I only had organized activities around three days a week and it wasn't easy with everything going on in my life to find time to work out on my own."