

# THE HEALTH CONSEQUENCES *of* UNDERNOURISHMENT



Many students can get caught in a cycle of undereating. Maybe you are having trouble making the food dollar stretch or finding yourself so busy with school and work that you aren't making food a priority. This can lead to undernourishment and health consequences.

## What is undernourishment?

Contrary to popular belief, you don't have to be starving to be undernourished. Undernourishment is a state in which an individual has an insufficient quantity or quality of nourishment to sustain proper health and growth.

Inadequate food can lead to too few calories to maintain your weight and inadequate vitamins and minerals for your body to sustain vital functions.

## Undernourishment can affect your mental and physical well-being.

### HEALTH RISKS

- Our food intake influences brain chemistry, thus influencing our mood and sleeping patterns and causing irritability.
- Initially, it may impair your ability to function normally and as a result, you may experience difficulty with even small tasks.
- Long term risks can include a weakened immune system, urinary infections, osteoporosis, and reduced muscle mass and strength.

### SYMPTOMS

Symptoms can include:

- Fatigue
- Difficulty maintaining focus
- Changes in mood (depression, irritability, lethargy)
- Delayed healing of small wounds/cuts
- Irregular menstruation in women
- Weight loss
- Frequent illness

## TIPS FOR HEALTHY EATING AND CAMPUS RESOURCES



### Try meal planning and preparation on the weekends.

Plan your meals for the week ahead, make a shopping list and go shopping. Cook or prepare several meals at a time such as a large batch of soup (and freeze some in single portions) or pasta dishes. Plan your produce purchases to only buy what you know you can eat. Make your own convenient snacks by buying in bulk to make individual packets of nuts or trail mix.



### Get into the habit of packing your lunch and snacks the night before.

Bring a tuna or peanut butter sandwich each day, along with a banana or carrots – making sure you have enough food to get through the day without needing buy something.



**For individualized nutrition advice**, make an appointment with our campus registered dietitian online at eTang ([etang.berkeley.edu](http://etang.berkeley.edu)) or by calling the Tang Appointment Line at (510) 642-2000.



### Know your resources.

- Financial Aid & Scholarships Office Food Assistance Program: [financialaid.berkeley.edu/food-assistance-program](http://financialaid.berkeley.edu/food-assistance-program)
- If you qualify for work-study, you may be eligible for the CalFresh Clinics (food stamps): [pantry.berkeley.edu/upcoming-events/calfresh-clinic](http://pantry.berkeley.edu/upcoming-events/calfresh-clinic)
- For immediate, emergency food support you can visit the UC Berkeley Food Pantry for groceries that can last for 8-10 days. Check the location and hours at: [pantry.berkeley.edu](http://pantry.berkeley.edu)
- Check out this snazzy 7-Day Menu for less than \$5 a Day: [bit.ly/UCBerkeley\\_7DayMenu](http://bit.ly/UCBerkeley_7DayMenu)
- This beautiful cookbook is available FREE online! Good and Cheap: Eat Well on \$4/Day