EATING 101
RU DINING HEALTHY?

A WEEKLY NEWSLETTER BROUGHT TO YOU BY THE RU HEALTHY DINING TEAM

This newsletter is a collaboration between Rutgers Dining Services and ScarletWell—a Chancellor-supported wellness initiative.

Bite Into Bedtime

Running on four hours of sleep and iced coffee? Your late-night habits might not be the only thing to blame. Both what you eat and when you eat can keep you up too. From sleep-supporting snacks to foods that could keep you tossing and turning, follow along as the Healthy Dining Team dishes out the scoop on how eating habits can help you catch more *Zzz's* to earn more A's.

Sleep Supporters	Sleep Thieves
Your plate does more than fuel you; it can also shape how well you sleep at night. While certain foods may help boost your sleep, maintaining a balanced diet and consistent sleep/wake cycle are important factors. • **Tryptophan**, found in foods such as turkey, chicken, fish, eggs, and tofu, can help serotonin production, a hormone that aids in sleep regulation. • **Melatonin** helps regulate your body's internal clock**.** Some foods naturally contain melatonin or may help increase its availability, including fatty fish, kiwi, apples, grapes, and bananas. • **Magnesium and potassium** promote muscle relaxation and support nerve function, which may make it easier for the body to wind down before bed. Caffeine-free teas, such as chamomile and mint, are sources of these nutrients, making snoozing as easy as ever. • **Planning time** for your meals and sleep can lead to overall physical and emotional wellness.	Just as some foods may help you sleep, others may work against it. Eating at conventional, consistent mealtimes can help regulate your body's internal clock, making it easier to fall and stay asleep throughout the night. • **Saturated fats** found in pizza, burgers, and baked goods may lead to a lack of deep sleep if eaten before bed. Deep sleep is essential for physical and mental restoration. • **Caffeine,** found in chocolate, energy drinks, tea, and coffee, can make it harder to fall asleep if consumed within six hours of bedtime because it may block hormones that promote sleepiness. • **Alcohol** can disrupt nighttime rest by causing more fragmented, disorganized sleep. While it may make you feel drowsy at first, it interferes with deeper sleep stages and can lead to more frequent awakenings throughout the night.

Feeling hungry before bed? Do not worry, catching some Zzz's does not have to mean going to bed hungry. Try peanut butter on whole-wheat bread, sliced pineapple, or Greek yogurt topped with sliced bananas. These quick snacks are sleep-friendly and satisfying, helping you wind down and wake up ready to tackle classes (and late-night study sessions) with energy.

Eat smart, snooze smarter!

HEALTHY DINING TEAM

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