EATING 101
RU DINING HEALTHY?

A Weekly Newsletter Brought to You by The RU Healthy Dining Team

A Joint Program Between RU Dining Services and The Institute for Food, Nutrition and Health

The Sweet Solution

When that 2 o'clock sweet craving hits between classes, reaching for quick fixes like cookies and candy can take a heavy toll. A diet high in ***added sugars*** is associated with negative health effects, such as obesity, mood swings, and poor sleep quality. Fortunately, you do not have to ghost dessert entirely. Visiting the dining hall for fresh fruit, yogurt parfaits, and spiced oatmeal can satisfy your sweet tooth while delivering that steady study energy you need to power through the rest of the day. Read on to learn how to spot added sugar sources and discover easy, healthy swaps right on campus.

Nature's Sweet Spot:	**The Added Sugar Trap:**
Without even realizing it, many of the foods you eat contain naturally occurring sugars. The *natural sugars* in whole foods like fruit, vegetables, dairy, and grains are great sources of energy to fuel your day and contain vitamins and minerals. You can identify natural sugars on nutrition labels by looking for 0g listed next to "Added Sugars" and no sugar sources within the ingredients list.	*Added sugar* is often used to enhance flavor, especially in processed foods, but consuming too much adds empty calories with no nutritional value. Unlike natural sugars, added sugars provide only short-term bursts of energy, leaving you feeling unsatisfied and lethargic. Check the nutrition facts label to see how much "Added Sugars" it contains and choose foods with 0g.

Consider the following healthy swaps next time you are in the dining hall:

	***Skip the Sugar Rush****:* Instead of reaching for a donut or muffin for breakfast, try plain yogurt or oatmeal topped with granola, fresh fruit, or a teaspoon of peanut butter. These smart, delicious, and mindful choices can satisfy your sweet tooth while packing in essential nutrients, fiber, and flavor for a balanced breakfast.
	***Drop that Drink***: Did you know? A single dining hall glass of soda contains more than half of the daily sugar recommendation! Instead of reaching for the sodas, lattes, or other sweetened drinks, try diluting a splash of 100% fruit juice or a squeeze of lemon into seltzer or water for a light, refreshing, naturally sweet sip.
	***Snack Smarter and Go Natural***: Need a quick fix? Grab an apple, banana, orange, or pear on your way out. The dining hall and most retail locations are stocked with fresh and juicy fruit that provides natural sweetness without any *added* or refined sugars. This is an easy way to stay powered through exams, activities, and your busiest days.

Sweeten Your Day the Smarter Way!

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References: "Added Sugars on the Nutrition Facts Label", Available at: https://www.fda.gov/food/nutrition-facts-label/added-sugars-nutrition-facts-label?utm_source=chatgpt.com Accessed on 09/16/2026. "Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2025-2030, Available at: https://cdn.realfood.gov/DGA.pdf Accessed on 09/16/2026. "Rethink your Drink", Available at https://www.cdc.gov/healthy-weight-growth/rethink-your-drink/index.html?utm_source=chatgpt.com Accessed on 09/16/2026. "7 signs your Body's Had Too Much Sugar", Available at https://backushospital.org/about-us/news/news-detail?articleId=47581 Accessed on 09/16/2026.

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