

## Study: 'Freshman 15' is a myth -- almost

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Rutgers' Cook College scientists say the theory that college students are likely to gain 15 pounds during their freshman year is a myth -- almost.

The college's study focused on a sample of 67 students who volunteered to be weighed in the fall, and again in the spring of their freshman year. The average weight gain was seven pounds, the result of eating approximately 112 excess calories per day.

"We found the first year of college is a period in which weight and fat gain may occur," said Daniel Hoffman, one of the professors from the school's Department of Nutritional Sciences on the study team. "But, in the group we studied, the weight gain is less than 15 pounds and is not universal."

However, three-quarters of the students who participated in the study did, in fact, gain weight.

"This suggests that the freshman year may be an environment where eating more food than the body needs is the predominant state for a significant number of students," said Peggy Policastro, a nutritionist and co-author of the study.

The results of the study will be published in the Journal of American College Health this spring.

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