

## Where College Students Live can Impact their Eating and Exercise Habits

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### ABSTRACT

University freshmen usually face with huge environmental changes. They are often stressful and may lead to some health-related problems. We wanted to know whether or not their residence influences eating and exercising habits. **PURPOSE:** To examine the effect of residence on level of physical activity, eating and other health related habits in college students. **Methods:** Total 71 college students participated in this study. Thirty one lives on campus and forty lives off campus. Participants completed a consent form and measurements of body weight, height, and body mass index (BMI). Level of physical activity was monitored using pedometer for 7 days. Exercise, smoke, and drink habits were surveyed by questionnaire. Diet pattern was assessed by the researcher based on the daily log for 7 days using computer software. **Results:** Of the 71 participants, 31.0% were men and 69.0% were women. Students living on campus were 40.9% in men and 43.7% in women. Physical activity was significantly higher in students living on campus both in men ( $14,152 \pm 1,120.2$  vs.  $7,611 \pm 3,379$ ,  $p < .001$ ) and women ( $13,043 \pm 3,864$  vs.  $5,948 \pm 1,803$ ,  $p < .001$ ) than students living off campus. In women, the total calorie ( $1,776 \pm 414.7$  vs.  $1,493 \pm 419.5$ ,  $p = .022$ ), alcoholic drink ( $1.9 \pm 1.4$  vs.  $1.1 \pm 0.4$ ,  $p = .016$ ), and mono saturated fat intakes ( $15.1 \pm 6.7$  vs.  $10.5 \pm 5.4$ ,  $p = .011$ ) were significantly higher in students living on campus. Consumption of vitamin C, D, and E were significantly lower in women students living on campus than students living off campus. **Conclusion:** Students who live on campus have a higher level of physical activity compared to their off-campus counterparts in both gender. However, dietary pattern was affected by the residence of college students only in women. Especially in women, where college students live can be important factors to impact their physical activity, life habits, and dietary pattern. Physical activity and nutrition education are crucial for college students because their lifestyle and dietary pattern may predispose them to the development of various diseases.