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Case Study

Case Study of Ms. Suzy Student

In this case study we looked at the diet of Ms. Suzy Student. Ms. Suzy is a 22-year old college student who attends CSU Chico. She is 5'4" and weighs 140 pounds. Her Body Mass Index (BMI) is 24. This is in the normal weight range for her height and weight. She attends classes and works part-time at a pet shop for 20 hours a week. Her activity level is low. She is not pregnant or nursing an infant and is slightly lactose intolerant. She exercises 40-60 minutes a day for four days of the week doing aerobic activities. She does not do any weightlifting. In the past six months she has lost 17 pounds by dieting. She cycles through gaining and regaining weight by going on and off a diet. When she diets she skips meals, usually breakfast and lunch, and replaces those meals with diet shakes and then has a small dinner. At the time of this diet recorded, she was not on a diet (weighed 157 then dropped 17). She is not taking any vitamin supplements or medications to our knowledge. If she was it could affect her nutrient profile by increasing her nutrient intake.

During the three days recorded, her average calorie intake exceeded her Estimated Energy Requirement. However, her intake varied everyday; some days she had a low caloric intake and some days she had a high caloric intake. Her EER was 2133.5kcal per day. Her average was 2350.7kcal per day. Looking at the calorie intake for each day shows that on day one her intake was 536.5 calories lower than her EER, on day two it was 1224 calories more than her EER and on day three it was only 36 calories lower than her EER. Her calorie intake fluctuated greatly over these three days. She met the protein

RDA for two out of the three days. For the most part, Suzy met the micronutrient with the exception of iron, vitamin E, and vitamin C. She also met her needs for kcals, protein and carbohydrate. She did not quite meet her fiber needs. According to My Pyramid, her average consumption of grains, 6.7ounces, meets the recommended intake of 6ounces per day, however, not half of the grains consumed were whole grain. Her fruit, vegetable, milk, meat and beans intakes were very low. Her intake of oils was 6.7tsp with the recommended amount of 6tsp. Her discretionary calories exceeded the recommended 267kcals by about 150kcals. She did not choose foods that were very nutrient dense but instead went for the easier, carbohydrate-heavy foods. Her discretionary calories came mostly from the added sugar in foods such as in her scone from Starbucks. Suzy's eating behavior seems to lack a normal pattern. She seems very pressed for times and is often eating on the run or when she is stressed. She does not seem to eat a very regular or filling breakfast so then she gets really hungry later in the day. Her emotions also seem to affect how much she eats.

The nutritional diagnostic for Suzy is related to excessive intake of protein, carbohydrate, vitamin A, niacin, and phosphorus. She has excessive carbohydrate intake due to not including fruits and vegetables in her diet and by not consuming nutrient dense foods most likely resulting in her periodic weight gain while not dieting. Her DRI for carbohydrate is 130grams and her average was 249.6grams. Excessive intake of phosphorus due to her intake of meat and grains can lead to a lack of absorption of calcium. She exceeded to phosphorus RDA by 800mg. Despite these excessive amounts, she is not considered overweight/obese. She is in the normal weight range for her BMI but her eating habits of going on and off a diet cause fluctuations in her weight.

I think that Suzy eats like an average college student. She could, however, be making more nutritious choices by planning out her meals for the week. She could have a breakfast with more filling food that will provide her with more energy. An example breakfast could be: a banana, fortified cereal, an 8oz glass of orange juice, and 1 cup yogurt. If she eats more fruits and vegetables then those calories will replace the calories from carbohydrate and fat that she consumes a lot of. She should also increase her fiber intake; that way she will feel full longer as well. Being a college student myself, I can understand the stress of everyday and the urge to eat convenient foods that are not as nutritionally beneficial. I do know that when I do make better choices I have more energy, feel a lot better about myself, and I save lots of money preparing my own food rather than eating out frequently. She could also drink regular coffee with cream and sugar rather than the blended drinks to reduce fat and sugar intake and still get the caffeine she likes. Tea is also a good alternative. If Suzy had a more regular diet she may not need to go on her diet every once in a while. It may help her maintain a steady, healthy weight that she is comfortable with.