

Lack of education on nutrition can cost lives- why it needs to be added to the sc...

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I sat nervously on the padded bench in the doctor's office. My eyes darting back and forth at the sterile walls and white apparalled nurses. I hated going to the doctor, but my symptoms had gone unacknowledged for too long.

My face was pale, my fingernails slightly blue and ice cold, my ribs showed visibly, and my arms were as thin as sticks. Not only that, the weight of fatigue pressed down on my forehead, begging me to sleep some more. A warm, friendly nurse beckoned us into one of the small examination rooms and I sat down next to my mom, relaying my symptoms. I was tired, I was cold, I had little appetite, and I had been becoming dizzy with my vision blacking out every time I stood up. The nurse nodded, looking concerned, and put a black cuff around my left arm to take my blood pressure. She looked at the machine, did a double-take, and then took my blood pressure again.

" Something must be wrong with my math." She said, laughing nervously. Afterward she took my pulse, 45 beats per minute. Lastly, she weighed me and measured my height. " Something is not right.

" She muttered, more to herself than to me. After taking my weight three times she finally wrote down the number- 108 lbs, for a five foot-nine inch girl. I had lost nearly twenty pounds in three weeks. Something was not right. The doctors drew blood, and also discovered my blood pressure was life-threateningly low. It was 80/30, which was about as low as you could possibly get without dying.

My diagnosis was simple, I had been busy doing both cross country running and cross country skiing, and had burned about 1500 calories by it. I had not
<https://assignbuster.com/lack-of-education-on-nutrition-can-cost-lives-why-it-needs-to-be-added-to-the-schools-curriculum/>

been consuming enough calories to replace calories lost, and had therefore lost twenty pounds unintentionally. For two weeks I had to be inactive and eat tons of protein to gain my weight back. I did not have an eating disorder, nor had I meant to lose weight. The problem was simple, and is a problem that many American teens face.

Often times teens are not educated about the proper amount of food for the amount of activity they have. I had gone my whole lifetime not knowing a thing about what protein, carbohydrates, fats, oils, or calories really were. Our nation desperately needs to be educated on proper food and nutrition. We are taught by all the weight-conscious advertisements that calories = bad, when really, you need lots of calories to survive! Many teens have an imperfect balance of grains, meats, beans, fats, fruits, vegetables, and milk. Many are also uneducated about the amount of food they should be eating to grow.

America needs to start teaching more of this in schools, and keeping teens from falling victim to malnutrition. If I had gone much longer without adjusting my calories for my activities, I could have died. It was advice from doctors and lots of research on my part that saved me. I discovered a website, mypyramid.gov, that was my savior, and told me the facts about food that I had been missing.

Kids shouldn't have to rely on the internet just to learn about nutrition.

America needs to shape up and make nutrition education a mandatory part of our schools!