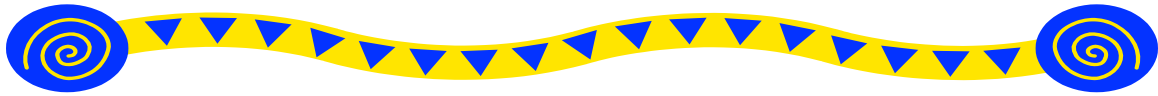


Frozen Entrées

Are they really a better alternative?



By: Erica Italiano

When Ally Bokesch, a senior at Chico State, gets home from a long day of school the last thing she wants to do is cook dinner.



Ally Bokesch eating her "Smart Ones" frozen entrée

"I don't want to waste time preparing a meal, when I can quickly unwrap a frozen meal and stick it in the microwave for five minutes," said Bokesch.

Many college students feel this way too. Countless numbers of students do not enjoy cooking or feel that they don't have the time. Others have just never been taught how.

Another reason why these frozen entrées seem so appetizing is because they claim that they are healthy. There are various brands

like Lean Cuisine, Healthy Choice, or Smart Ones.

Mary Zahara, a representative of Weight Watchers highly recommends the Smart Ones frozen entrées to her clients. "They are convenient, easy, they taste great, and it says how many points are in them right on the box," said Zahara.

Some may find that when eating these meals to lose weight, it may not be helping. This can be due to the high amounts of sodium they use for flavoring and preservatives. The sodium can cause your body to retain water which can result in no weight change or possibly weight gain due to water weight.

"There is a lot of sodium in those meals, some of them contain three-quarters of your daily amount of sodium in just one meal!" said Stephanie Bianco-Simmeral, a nutrition teacher at Chico State.

Not only is there a great amount of sodium in the frozen meals, but some do not fill you up enough, so many people find that they need something else to go with it.

"Sometimes after eating a frozen meal, I am still hungry, so I will

snack on other things or I will end up making a little sandwich” said Bokesch.

These meals can also be on the pricy side, with some costing \$3.50 per meal. This can cause a problem among “starving” college students, who have very little money.

“I would only recommend frozen meals to clients if money wasn’t an issue,” said Bianco-Simmeral.

Another issue with the frozen entrees is that you can not choose what goes in it. If you do not like onions, and the meal you want has onions in it, then you are out of luck.

On the other hand, if a person is not getting the nutrients they

need in their diet then maybe these frozen entrees are worth the extra money.

“I never make time to eat fruits and vegetables, and some of the meals I buy provide good amounts of them,” said Bokesch.

Many of the frozen entrées that are in the supermarket today say how many servings of fruits and vegetables are in them. This may influence more consumers to purchase them.

If you don’t have time to make a meal, and you aren’t on a sodium restricted diet, then frozen entrées may be a great alternative for you instead of cooking a meal.