Lehigh University InSTALLment

March 2015: Special Spring Break Edition

My Story
Matt Cook, Class of 2016
What a perfect day! The sun was shining, the air was warm, and we just claimed our spot on Belmar’s beach to enjoy a day of fun. After setting up our blankets and setting down our bags, my friends and I and took off running for the waves and into the chilly water for the first time of the year. Little did I know, this particular dive would change my life forever.

The storms of the season had churned up the sand, and left some unseen sandbars scattered around the ocean floor. Of course, I had my arms outstretched in a diving position, but the wave pushed my arms upward, and my head continued downward. My forehead hit the sand straight on and I immediately knew that something had gone terribly wrong. I stood up, dazed, feeling pain in my head and neck. I didn’t know exactly what was going on, but I knew it wasn’t good.

I was dizzy from the impact, so I tried to walk it off, which made my friends think that everything was fine. They said I probably had a slight concussion from the incident but as my head began to spin and stars blurred my vision, I knew that I needed help.

A lifeguard came over and told me not to move. She called for an ambulance and I was shortly led off the beach on a stretcher, feeling dazed, confused, and terrified of what was to come. My friends came to the hospital and called my parents. After X-rays and an MRI, I was presented with the news that I never thought I’d hear in my lifetime. I had fractured my C-6 vertebral in my neck, which would require emergency surgery. The only good news was that the fracture did not cut all the way through the bone. Had the fracture been any worse, I could be paralyzed today.

I was scheduled for surgery that same day, the surgeon connected the vertebrae above and below with a metal plate screwed in place for stability. This metal plate will forever be a part of me.

Luckily, after spending three months in a neck brace, I made a full recovery. I still love the beach and I still love the water. But I will never dive head first into water for the rest of my life. Although this was a freak accident, I urge other students to be cautious when entering the ocean or a pool. In an instant, a simple day on the beach turned into the scariest moment of my life.

I would advise everyone to enjoy themselves this Spring Break but still be cautious while doing so because accidents can occur in the blink of an eye.

Do you have a impactful story to contribute? Send us an email at inhaps@lehigh.edu

Viruses or Bacteria?

What’s got you sick?
Antibiotics only treat bacterial infections such as strep throat and urinary tract infections. Viral illnesses cannot be treated with antibiotics. When an antibiotic is not prescribed, talk to your provider about symptom relief. He/She may recommend over the counter medications, plenty of fluids and extra rest/sleep. Remember, antibiotics aren’t always the answer.

Sleep Statistics for Lehigh Students

Check out these facts from NCHA UG Spr ’14

56.7% of students report having an extremely hard time falling asleep in the past week

1/3 of students are only getting enough sleep to feel rested 1-2x/week

9 out of 10 students report feeling sleepy during daytime activities

Get more ZZZZZs

TAKE A NAP! Myth: Napping is only for children, older adults and/or lazy people.
Fact: Many of history’s most influential and (productive) people were champion nappers like Thomas Edison, Eleanor Roosevelt, John Rockefeller and Ronald Reagan.

Need a quick power nap on campus?
Relax in a comfortable environment with the Metronap EnergyPod, the world’s first chair designed exclusively for power napping. The napping zones are located in Taylor Gym in the Hall of Fame Loft and the 2nd Floor (South Hallway) and will be piloted though June.

Looking For Ways to Lower Your Stress Level?

De-stress with Dogs: Stop by the UC Front Lawn on 3/30 from 11am-3pm and relax with some trained therapy dogs and enjoy an energy boost from some healthy snacks to keep you fueled for your day. Rain location, STEPS lobby. The event is hosted by the Peer Health Advisers.

De-stress After Dark: Hang out in Lamberton on 4/9 from 9pm-12am. Chair massage, yoga/meditation and some late night food will be provided.

For an appointment at the Health and Wellness Center either go online to www.lehigh.edu/health to OSH or call 610-758-3870.