

# WORKPLACE WELLNESS

Provided by Lawley



## Healthy Workplace Food Options

Most full-time employees eat at least one or two meals at work each workday. Not only are a significant number of meals eaten in the workplace, but work is also where employees are most susceptible to distracted or stress-related eating. As an employer, you can help your employees make healthy meal and snack choices.

Good nutrition is an essential part of a healthy lifestyle, and healthier employees can mean increased productivity, fewer sick days and fewer on-the-job accidents. Health care costs associated with poor diets account for roughly \$200 billion each year in lost productivity and medical expenses. Serving unhealthy food at staff lunches or offering high-fat and sugar-filled choices in vending machines or your employee cafeteria is detrimental to your wellness program and your employees' health. While you can't control what employees choose to eat, you can encourage healthy choices by providing nutritious options.

### *Implementing Healthier Food Options*

When beginning a healthy food initiative, you need to first assess your current food options in vending machines, the cafeteria and at catered events and meetings. Then survey employees to better understand the types of healthy foods that they would be interested in seeing at the workplace. Meet with vending machine and cafeteria vendors to discuss increasing the availability of healthy food and drink options. Ask your regular event caterer about healthier options or consider a new caterer.

In general, phasing out unhealthy food by first offering healthy alternatives and then slowly dropping less healthy choices might make the transition smoother for some employees.

### *Healthy Options*

As you add in healthier food options to workplace events, consider the following foods.

#### **Beverages:**

- Ice water or bottled spring or sparkling water with no sugar added
- 100 percent fruit or vegetable juices
- Skim or 1 percent milk

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- Coffee with skim or 1 percent milk, or fat-free half-and-half
- Regular or herbal tea

### Breakfast:

- Fresh fruit
- Yogurt
- Bagels with fat-free cream cheese or sugar-free jelly
- Granola bars (5 grams of fat or less per bar)

### Lunch and Dinner:

- Entrees that are broiled, baked, grilled or steamed (instead of fried, for example)
- Fresh fruits and vegetables
- Salads with low-fat dressings on the side
- Whole grain breads

### Snacks:

- Raw vegetables with fat-free or low-fat dressing or salsa
- Low-fat pretzels served with sweet mustard
- Baked tortilla chips with salsa
- Fresh fruit

Providing healthy options in the workplace is a simple way to positively influence your employees' eating habits, contributing to a healthier workforce.