

Hosting Healthy Meetings & Events



Offering a healthy environment can help keep staff and participants alert, productive, and engaged.

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EAT WELL

Talk with your caterer to ensure they're on board with offering healthy foods. The following are some examples of nutritious food and beverages that can be served.





Eat Well - General Information

- Avoid serving food during meetings when it is not required (e.g. when the meeting does not take place during a mealtime).
- Choose foods based on Canada's Food Guide.* Aim to include all three food groups at meals and at least two food groups at snacks. The food groups are: **Vegetables and Fruits**, **Whole Grain Foods**, and **Protein Foods**.
- Serve vegetable and fruit options at all meals and snacks.
- Request small portions (e.g. bagels, wraps and sandwiches in quarters or halves).
- Consider not offering less healthy snack or dessert choices (e.g. cakes, cookies, candies). Ask for bite-sized portions if you do offer them.
- Offer at least one vegetarian choice (e.g. bean casserole, stir-fry).
- Serve locally grown and produced foods as often as possible.
- Ask attendees in advance about food allergies and special dietary needs.
- Have facilities for attendees to wash their hands before eating.

Tools for a healthy workplace nutrition environment at work:

- Use the Ontario Dietitians in Public Health Toolkit: Creating a Healthy Workplace Nutrition Environment.
Visit www.odph.ca/workplace-nutrition-advisory-group.
- * Visit <https://food-guide.canada.ca/>





Eat Well Beverages

- Tap water or infused tap water (e.g. citrus or cucumber)
- Skim, 1%, or 2% M.F. white milk
- Plain fortified soy beverage
- Coffee served with milk or 5% cream. Offer the option of decaffeinated coffee/tea where possible
- Tea served with milk or lemon



Eat Well Snacks

- Raw vegetables
- Fruit or fruit salad (fresh or packed in water or juice)
- Yogurt or cottage cheese: 2% M.F. or less
- Lower fat cheeses: 20% M.F. or less; 3/4" cubes or smaller
- Crackers: whole grain, lower fat, lower sodium
- Mini lower fat, higher fibre muffins
- Trail mix
- Parfait (yogurt, berries, high fibre cereal, nuts, seeds)
- Plain popcorn
- Hummus

Eat Well Breakfast

- Hot or cold whole grain cereals with skim, 1%, or 2% M.F. milk
- Fruit toppings for the cereal (e.g. fresh berries, dried fruit, bananas)
- Eggs: e.g. poached or hard boiled, vegetable omelettes
- Whole grain breads and bagels
- 100% nut butters: e.g. peanut, almond, or cashew
- See some of the snack suggestions





Eat Well Lunch/Dinner

- Vegetables: raw or cooked with little or no added fat
- Dark green leafy salads (e.g. romaine, spinach, or kale) served with vinaigrette dressing on the side
- Whole grain breads, bagels, or buns
- Sandwiches and wraps made with vegetables and little or no mayonnaise, butter, or margarine
- Smaller portions ($\leq 75\text{g}$) of lean meats (e.g. roast beef, chicken, turkey)
- Lower sodium broth-based soups or soups made with milk instead of cream
- Broiled, poached, steamed, baked, or roasted main dishes (e.g. vegetables, eggs, fish, poultry, meat)
- Stir-fries, whole grain pastas with tomato-based sauce or low-fat international dishes
- Pizza: whole grain, thin crust, less cheese, more vegetables, leaner or no meats (e.g. chicken, ham)
- Meatless dishes with lentils, beans, or tofu

Move More and Sit Less

Offering participants the chance to move more and sit less can help keep them alert, involved and help lower the health risks of extended sitting and inactivity.

Here are ways to help people to move more and sit less:

- Include a message in the agenda encouraging attendees to stand as they need.
- For small groups (up to 4), host a walking meeting. Send the agenda ahead. Plan a safe route. The note taker takes notes while the group is standing.
- Offer stretch breaks regularly, to give people the opportunity to get up and move around at least every hour.
- Arrange for a walk during part of the lunch hour. Let people not familiar with the area know about local trails or walking routes.



Keep the Air Clean



A meeting room without fresh, clean air can make people feel tired. It can cause headaches and make lung problems worse. To help everyone take part in the meeting, make sure that fresh air can circulate well in the room. It is also helpful to create a scent-reduced policy in your workplace. Tell the people coming to your meeting or event about the policy ahead of time. Ask them not to use creams and shampoos etc. that have a strong smell or have perfumes in them.

Food Safety

Illness can result from improper food handling. It can include preparing or serving food in an unsafe way. Lack of proper hand washing also increases the risk of illness. Here are a few ways to reduce the risk of foodborne illness:

- Arrange food services from inspected vendors.
- Keep hot foods hot (above 60°C or 140°F) and cold foods cold (below 4°C or 40°F).
- Wash your hands before and after handling foods.

Consider the Environment

Try these tips to save money and the environment:

- Use regular dishes and flatware instead of disposable dishes.
- If you must use disposable dishes, flatware, etc., choose paper and compostable items.
- Encourage attendees to bring their own reusable coffee cups and water bottles. Put a reminder on the agenda.
- Serve milk and other liquids in pitchers rather than separate bottles or cartons.
- Use condiments in bulk rather than single servings.
- Use reusable name tags.
- Provide blue boxes for recycling.
- Use a white board or chalk board for messages, directions etc.
- Compost leftovers if possible instead of throwing them in the garbage.



Notes





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For more information, contact:

Hastings Prince Edward Public Health

Phone: 613-966-5500 or toll-free 1-800-267-2803

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