



# **HEALTHY EATING IN WORKSITES**

**A Healthy Arizona Worksites Program Toolkit**

**For more information about the Healthy Arizona Worksites  
Program, go to [www.healthyazworksites.org](http://www.healthyazworksites.org)**



**Healthy Eating Interventions**

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## INTRODUCTION

You can't have a healthy company without healthy employees. Improving access to healthy foods is a key strategy in preventing and managing obesity as well as other chronic conditions, such as diabetes and heart disease. Improving access to healthy foods at worksites is a promising way to increase employees' intake of healthy foods and combat chronic conditions because most Americans spend a substantial part of their time at work. Workplaces are critical both as an environment that can contribute to healthy eating as well as a location to reach targeted populations for health education, awareness, behavior change, and targeted interventions aimed at increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables and other healthier foods.

According to the Society for Human Resource Management Foundation (SHRM), a large majority of workers are obese (63%) and an even larger group are not eating healthy, as measured by a low intake of fruits and vegetables (77%) (SHRM Foundation, Promoting Employee Wellbeing, 2011). By engaging in healthy worksite efforts to increase healthy eating, employers can decrease costs related to obesity and other related conditions. For example, the excess medical costs related to obesity for an at-risk employee is \$1,351 per year – and is further compounded by excess medical costs for related conditions such as diabetes (\$1,176 per year) and high cholesterol (\$892 per year) (SHRM Foundation, 2011). These same conditions together account for approximately 41% of lost workload each year (SHRM Foundation, 2011). As little as a 1% reduction in excess weight, elevated blood pressure, glucose, and cholesterol has been shown to save \$83 to \$103 annually in medical costs per person (Henke, et al., 2010).

By conducting a comprehensive needs assessment of the health risks and interests of your employee population, you can determine the modifiable risk factors (e.g., increasing intake of fruits and vegetables) and the chronic diseases (e.g., obesity, diabetes, heart disease) that are impacting employee health. Armed with this information, your worksite can identify the most promising strategies that will help to improve the health of your employees while also contributing to improved employee morale and productivity. This toolkit offers your worksite multiple strategies to increase healthy eating among your employees with varying levels of:

- **Outcomes**, or degree to which the intervention can be expected to bring about significant improvements in employees' physical activity
- Potential for **sustainability**, meaning the extent to which the intervention can continue to be in place and be effective with minimal ongoing resources required
- Required **resources** (financial and human)



Your worksite can use these three variables to identify the strategies, or interventions, that most effectively meet your healthy worksite goals and objectives. Healthy eating strategies are categorized by type of intervention:

- Policies
- Environmental supports
- Awareness and educational efforts
- Employer-offered health benefits
- Additional ideas that impact healthy worksite culture

Policy and environmental support interventions are generally the most effective and most sustainable of all strategies. These interventions create change that can be maintained on a permanent basis, impact larger numbers of employees, and while sometimes may require a larger initial investment, often require only minimal resources to keep in place. Policy and environmental support interventions provide the conditions that can make healthy behaviors more appealing, accessible, and easy, such as ensuring that employees have ample time to eat healthy snacks or meals and a clean, pleasant environment in which to prepare healthy foods.

Research has shown that the more strategies that are implemented together (e.g., education and awareness efforts implemented in conjunction with healthy eating policies and a supportive worksite environment that encourages access to healthy food choices), the more successful the outcome and impact will be (CDC Workplace Health Promotion, 2014). For maximum effectiveness, your worksite should aim to utilize multiple strategies, and integrate at least some policy and environmental strategies.

The following information is offered for each intervention, as appropriate:

- Purpose
- Costs and materials: staff time, equipment or materials, promotional costs, administrative costs, incentives, and other costs to plan and implement
- Steps for implementation
- Recommended communication activities
- Opportunities for incentives (where relevant)
- Examples (such as policies)
- Potential evaluation measures: process, short-term and mid-term outcomes
- Additional resources

Worksite investment in wellness initiatives can vary widely, and within nearly every intervention, there is opportunity to scale the activity to fit the size of your worksite and the resources you have to devote. Keeping your worksite's health improvement plan in mind, your worksite can start with short-term objectives and as support, engagement, and resources may increase, you can focus on



longer-term goals and achieving your overall vision. This can involve an increase in the number of strategies you implement or increased intensity of strategies (for example, moving from offering healthier food options at a snack bar to a more comprehensive healthy options approach encompassing the cafeteria, events, and meetings).

### **Special considerations**

#### *Differing characteristics of your employees and worksite*

It is valuable to make efforts to include everyone in worksite health efforts, taking into consideration the demographics of your workforce in addition to many other factors that may influence their participation in healthy worksite activities. Offering options or alternatives so that everyone can participate regardless of the kind of work they do, where they are situated, and in what industry or sector your worksite is in, will help you get closer to full participation in healthy worksite efforts.

For example, the participation levels in wellness programs and therefore the benefits of these programs are often more pronounced in employees of higher socioeconomic status (e.g., white-collar vs. blue-collar jobs) (Champagne et al., 2012). Therefore, it is important to ensure that programs are offered in such a way that all employees have equal access, and that at least some program offerings are tailored to the particular needs and constraints of the low-wage workforce (ranging from night shifts to frequent overtime to the fatigue resulting from prolonged standing at work). For example, employees who travel frequently or are highly mobile might benefit most from strategies making use of technology (such as making awareness and educational efforts available online), or increased flexibility or subsidies since they may be unable to utilize on-site kitchens or access healthy foods at the worksite, for example. Know your “audience” – your employees — not only in terms of what healthy eating interventions might most appeal to them, but also in terms of the work environment and the nature of the work that they do.

Evidence also suggests that the key to long-term, sustainable workplace health protection and health promotion programs may depend on engaging employees at all levels of the worksite in assessing needs and offering all employees opportunities to participate in identifying strategies and activities to address those needs (Henning et al., 2009, p.27). After completing a needs and interest survey and focus groups with employees from various levels of the organization, one worksite located in an industrial park completed a root cause analysis and discovered that employees were interested in eating healthier and increasing intake of fresh fruit and vegetables. Yet they faced many barriers such as lack of time to shop at various markets, high cost, and a lack of local produce. To meet the unique needs of their employee population, this worksite worked with local farms to increase access to fresh produce for employees by bringing produce from local farms directly to the worksite at wholesale prices (E. Erck, personal communication, June, 10, 2014)..



Analyze demographic characteristics of your workforce (number of workers by wage level, job type, educational requirements, age distribution, gender, ethnicity, etc.). Also consider work organization characteristics that might influence time or motivation for program participation (shift work, overtime, contract work, etc.). Be sure to consider:

- Sedentary jobs (e.g., desk jobs)
- Physically demanding jobs (such as construction, which may require more frequent snack/meal breaks)
- Shift work
- Decentralized or multiple locations, telecommuters, employees whose jobs require significant long-distance or local travel
- Union vs. non-union employees
- Salaried vs. hourly employees
- Industry sector
- Size of business

Consider your “audience” – your employees – not only in terms of what interventions might most appeal to them, but also where there may be important limitations or challenges to be addressed or overcome. For example, food and beverage preferences or requirements can be deeply ingrained and related to ethnicity/culture, region, level of exposure to new foods, individual taste, and simply what one’s palate has adjusted to over time (such as high-sodium foods or highly-sweetened beverages).

Be mindful of accommodating the needs of all your employees, offering options that everyone can participate in, and ensuring that no one feels excluded or alienated by programs or changes in your workplace. Many people have food or beverage restrictions due to health needs (such as those with diabetes, celiac disease, or other allergies/intolerances), religion, or other preferences (such as vegetarianism). Be sure to take any needs related to physical ability into consideration, as well, making sure that food preparation and storage spaces are accessible, and that any outings (such as a group trip to a farmer’s market) is open to everyone.

#### *Partnerships and other cost-saving strategies*

Worksite wellness is not a “one size fits all” activity. Worksites can help each other by sharing resources and best practices. Another way to support an individual company’s healthy worksites efforts is to partner with other companies, community leaders, and local experts, forming a worksite collaborative. Collaboratives, or employee coalitions, provide the opportunity to compare program successes and challenges and share solutions with peers. A collaborative approach may also offer small companies the chance to combine forces to improve purchasing power for wellness-related programs. For example, companies in the same building could partner with building management and the vending machine supplier to bring in a refrigerated vending machine offering



healthy food choices. One such example is the Greater Fall River Small Worksite Wellness Project, which is making incentives and other resources available to small businesses to promote healthy employee outcomes, as well as collect valuable data (<http://www.gfirpartners.com/WorksiteHealthSmallWorksite.html>). Your worksite can consider partnering with others and tap into the expertise of local human service organizations, not-for-profit organizations, health plans, business coalitions, community-based organizations, and academic institutions. On a smaller scale, employees might support a healthy worksite effort by pooling funds to purchase healthier food options (such as in bulk) or pay the monthly cost for a water cooler. Such “ground up” approaches can serve to change worksite culture and demonstrate support for more intensive healthy eating efforts, too.

### *Support and engagement*

In order for healthy worksite efforts to be widely supported and utilized, the wellness champion or team must actively promote their efforts from the very beginning. Engaging employees as champions of healthy worksite efforts as early as during the assessment and planning stage will increase employee investment and engagement. Similarly, gaining support and buy-in from management is key to success and needs to start early with the planning process. Engagement from and ongoing communication with management can help to preempt or address concerns that might be raised. Management can also help to model healthy behaviors and participation in healthy worksite efforts, ultimately contributing to a healthy worksite culture.

When planning interventions, try to anticipate where there may be resistance or concern and plan for how you will address it. Concerns about lost revenue, such as with food concessions, can be a significant barrier. Working closely with those responsible for concessions can help to unearth specific concerns and how they may be addressed, such as demonstrating employee support through a survey or pilot program.

Other barriers might be posed by the general worksite culture or simple resistance to change. Regular communication is key to building broader buy-in and participation. Communicate your healthy eating efforts in ways that demonstrate the benefits of healthy eating, provide opportunities for employees to express their tastes and preferences, and allow for employees to try the healthy options multiple times through free or reduced-cost sampling to help build interest and appeal. Repeated exposure to a food can generally help people develop a taste for it, and some research has found that trying a food 9 or 10 times can lead to a child liking it (Fleming, 2013). See the “Recommended communication activities” section for each healthy worksite intervention for specific ideas about effectively communicating your efforts to increase healthy eating.



## HEALTHY EATING GUIDELINES AND BENEFITS OF HEALTHY EATING

Information about what constitutes “healthy eating” as well as the benefits people can expect from eating a healthy diet are a good knowledge foundation for any healthy eating efforts – particularly those that aim to inform or educate your employees.

### **Recommended dietary guidelines**

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Department of Health and Human Services release recommended dietary guidelines every 5 years. 2010’s dietary guidelines are intended for all individuals 2 years and older, and the “My Plate” approach is a useful guide in helping individuals to plan and eat healthy meals for themselves and their families. According to the USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion (2011), key dietary guidelines messages include:

Build a healthy plate:

- Make half your plate fruits and vegetables
- Switch to skim or 1% milk
- Make at least half your grains whole
- Vary your protein food choices
- Keep your food safe to eat

Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt:

- Choose food and drinks with little or no added sugars
- Look out for salt (sodium) in the foods you buy
- Eat fewer foods that are high in solid fats

Eat the right amount of calories for you:

- Enjoy your food, but eat less
- Cook more often at home (including preparing food to bring to work) where you are in control of what’s in your food
- When eating out – including at the worksite – choose lower calorie menu options
- Write down what you eat to keep track of how much you eat
- If you drink alcoholic beverage, do so sensibly – limit to one drink a day for women or two drinks a day for men

Use food labels to make better choices:

- Choose foods with lower calories, saturated fats, trans fat, and sodium
- Limit foods with added sugar





See “Provide nutritional information” for more information about how to share nutrition information with your employees and how to help them understand such information.

Above is a *summary of messages*; when you communicate any of these messages to employees, be sure to use the “Let’s Eat for the Health of It” brochure or other resources below to provide tips and supporting information so that your employees can take action to eat healthier.

### **Benefits of healthy eating**

Helping your employees understand the benefits of healthy eating – for themselves as well as for their families – can serve as an effective supporting message and strong motivator to promote healthy eating.

- Healthy eating helps prevent high cholesterol and high blood pressure and helps reduce the risk of developing chronic diseases such as cardiovascular disease, cancer, and diabetes.
- Healthy eating helps reduce one’s risk for developing obesity, osteoporosis, iron deficiency, and dental caries (cavities).
- Healthy eating is associated with reduced risk for many diseases, including several of the leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, stroke, and diabetes.
- Proper nutrition promotes the optimal growth and development of children.
- Healthy eating in childhood and adolescence is important for proper growth and development and can prevent health problems such as obesity, dental caries, iron deficiency, and osteoporosis.

### **Additional dietary guideline and nutrition label resources for consumers:**

- Consumer brochure:  
[http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dietary\\_guidelines\\_for\\_americans/DG2010Brochure.pdf](http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/sites/default/files/dietary_guidelines_for_americans/DG2010Brochure.pdf)
- Tips, trackers, and other resources for consumers and professionals:  
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/>
- Selected dietary guidelines messages for consumers: <http://www.choosemyplate.gov/food-groups/downloads/MyPlate/SelectedMessages.pdf>
- Nutrition label brochure for consumers:  
<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/downloads/NutritionFactsLabel.pdf>

### **Additional guidelines for worksites to use in implementing healthier vending and concessions:**

- Food and nutrition guidelines for vending operations (page 14):  
[http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines\\_for\\_Federal\\_Concessions\\_and\\_Vending\\_Operations.pdf](http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines_for_Federal_Concessions_and_Vending_Operations.pdf)



- Food and nutrition guidelines for concessions (page 6):  
[http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations.pdf](http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines%20for%20Federal%20Concessions%20and%20Vending%20Operations.pdf)

## POLICIES

Creating healthy eating policies at your worksite not only shows employer commitment to keeping employees healthy through access to healthy food choices – it helps to make the healthier options the easy or default option. The most effective interventions are those that change the context, or environment, to make the healthy choice the default choice (Frieden, 2010). Healthy eating policies also help to shape a healthy worksite culture. Worksite culture is a powerful force in encouraging and supporting employees to eat healthier. It is the set of attitudes and behaviors that define the company and how employees work together (CDC Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity: Steps to Wellness, 2012). Think of worksite culture as informal policy - unwritten “rules” or guides that are publicly supported and widely communicated.

As defined by the CDC, a culture of health “is the creation of a working environment where employee health and safety is valued, supported and promoted through workplace health programs, policies, benefits, and environmental supports” (CDC Workplace Health Promotion, Glossary of Terms, 2014). Building a culture of health is the responsibility of all levels of the organization, particularly upper as well as middle management, who should not only support a healthy work environment but actively demonstrate the organization’s commitment to it. Adopting and maintaining a culture of health establishes healthy worksite activities as a routine part of business operations aligned with overall business goals.

### Healthy food options

#### **Evidence:**

*CDC ScoreCard #30 (1pt)*

*CDC ScoreCard #31 (1pt)*

*CDC ScoreCard #32 (3pts)*

*CDC ScoreCard #35 (3pts)*

*County Health Rankings/scientifically supported:*

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/worksite-obesity-prevention-interventions>

*County Health Rankings/some evidence:* <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/healthy-vending-machine-options>

*Convergence Partnership/recommended:*

<http://www.convergencepartnership.org/atf/cf/%7B245a9b44-6ded-4abd-a392-ae583809e350%7D/PROMISING%20STRATEGIES-07.18.11.PDF>



*Community Guide/recommended:* <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/obesity/workprograms.html>

## **Purpose**

Provide healthy food and beverage options in all vending machines, snack bars, coffee bars, cafeterias, and other concessions.

Some evidence has demonstrated that when worksites increase availability of healthy food and beverage options, such as in vending machines, employees eat healthier (County Health Ranking & Roadmaps, 2013). Additionally, employees appreciate employer efforts to promote healthy foods and beverages in the workplace. Ninety-seven percent of all organizations that have practices and/or policies promoting healthy food and drinks at work-related functions or through on-site food sales reported that their employees have responded favorably (SRHM Foundation, Healthy Food and Drinks in the Workplace, 2011).

The CDC Healthy Worksite ScoreCard recommends setting a goal of offering 50% healthy food and beverage options in all food concession spaces. For a general guideline, the Cleveland Clinic gives these healthy food rules: minimal saturated fats, no trans fats, minimal added sugar, and minimal sodium (Cleveland Clinic Wellness Editors, 2011). See "Healthy eating guidelines" for additional detail.

As a general guideline, the Integrated Healthcare Association (IHA) defines healthy beverages as: water, coffee or tea, reduced fat milk (no more than 3 teaspoons of sugar per 1 cup milk), 100% fruit/vegetable juice, fruit-based drinks with at least 50% juice and no added sugar, and other non-caloric beverages such as diet soda (IHA, 2008).

The IHA defines healthy foods as: no more than 35% calories from fat (except nuts and seeds), no more than 10% of calories from saturated fat, does not contain trans fat (no hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oils), no more than 35% total weight from sugar (except unprocessed fruits and vegetables), and low sodium (less than 140 mg per serving) (IHA, 2008).

## **Costs and materials**

Staff time will be required to establish policies as well as plan and implement healthier food options. The costs of healthier foods may not be significantly more expensive than your worksite's current offerings, but if your worksite has not previously offered any vending or concessions before, there may be costs associated with implementing a new initiative. Staff time may be required in making food purchasing changes (or food preparation changes, in the case of a cafeteria) or hiring a nutritional consultant to advise on purchasing and preparation.



Healthier foods, including fruits and vegetables, can sometimes be perishable and therefore require refrigeration. If your worksite does not already provide refrigerated vending machines or refrigerated displays, this may be an expense to consider or a requirement to negotiate with a vending company.

Vending machine companies and food concessions managers may express concern about the possibility of lost revenue in offering healthier options. However, many examples of stocking healthier options demonstrate no lost revenue or in some case, increased revenue. Market research demonstrates that many people are trying to eat healthier and that healthier snack sales are outpacing traditional snack food sales (Center for Science in the Public Interest, 2013).

### **Implementation activities**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program's Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Designate a champion or team to establish and implement healthy food policies.** This should include a human resources staff member since healthy food options may require management approval and investment. A larger team would be ideal for larger employers that may offer many food and beverage options at work. If your worksite has a cafeteria and/or catering service, be sure to include staff representatives from food services on the team.
2. **Identify healthy eating guidelines to use in assessing the nutritional content of foods and beverages,** and/or identify a consultant, such as a registered dietitian, to guide food and beverage selection. A local community health center, hospital, or your company's health insurance provider may offer services for free or a reduced rate.
3. **Conduct an environmental scan to assess existing healthy food and beverage options** and where there are opportunities for improvement. Identify what concession options you will be targeting for improvement or what options you may be creating from scratch.
4. **Survey employees** to learn about food and beverage preferences and determine preferences and tastes, including what foods are culturally relevant to employees.
5. **Create a policy** that outlines the types of foods and beverages that are acceptable in vending machines, cafeterias, and other concessions.
6. **Coordinate with internal cafeteria or catering services, vending machine companies, and other food vendors** to implement healthy options policies. Some policies may be able to be implemented relatively quickly and in collaboration with internal food services or external vendors. For others, your worksite may have to define requirements for offering healthy options and negotiate at vendor contract renewals. Be sure that vendor contracts provide your worksite with data on purchases so that you can evaluate the effectiveness of your healthy food options efforts.
7. **Communicate new policies and practices to employees** (see "Recommended communication activities").



8. **Present healthier foods in an appealing way.** Whether your worksite is implementing something as simple as an “honor system” snack rack (where healthier foods are offered and employees pay into a fund) or making changes to cafeteria offerings, take a lesson from food industry marketing. Be sure to present healthier foods in an appealing way, such as through nice packaging or presentation (like offering fresh fruit in a basket) and making healthier options highly visible (at eye level or in front of less healthy options). Cost is also a major determinant in food and beverage choices. Ensure that most, if not all, healthy options are not more expensive than less healthy options. Ideally your worksite can subsidize healthier options and offer them at a reduced rate to employees.
9. If possible, **offer employees the opportunity to taste new offerings** for free or at reduced rates. See Healthy food tasting for ideas.
10. **Make sure your company's healthy eating guidelines are clearly outlined in vendor contracts.**
11. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

#### **Recommended communication activities**

- **Communicate with staff** about the initiation of an effort to offer healthier foods, emphasizing that staff tastes and preferences will play a role in policy development and implementation. This helps to minimize resistance to new or different food and beverage offerings.
- **Communicate new healthy food and beverage policies with staff** in the context of the benefits and advantages of eating healthy.
- **Engage in ongoing “marketing” efforts** to promote healthier food and beverage options, reminding staff that the healthier options exist and how appealing they are. See “Benefits of healthy eating” and “Awareness and educational efforts” for ideas and inspiration.

#### **Example**

Sample healthy options policy:

<http://cspinet.org/images/ProcurementPolicies2.pdf>

Healthy beverage vending policy example, page 38:

<http://changelabsolutions.org/publications/healthy-beverage-vending-agreement>

#### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Number of healthier food and beverage options available
- Number of healthier option foods and beverages consumed (particularly in proportion to less healthy options), measured through fruit/vegetable intake, consumption of lower-sodium options, and/or consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages



- Self-reported interest in healthier options (particularly changes over time)
- Number of vendors satisfying your worksite’s healthy food options policy
- Vending/concessions revenue and sales data
- Measures taken in food preparation in cafeterias, e.g. eliminating trans fats or achieving “standard” or “above standard” guidelines. See an example of guidelines here: [http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations.pdf](http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines%20for%20Federal%20Concessions%20and%20Vending%20Operations.pdf)

### Considerations for different industries and sectors

If your worksite has a cafeteria or catering services consider incorporating healthy eating into the procurement and contract process with vendors. Strategies include:

- **Adding healthy eating strategies into the RFP process** to ensure that vendors understand from the beginning the organization’s commitment to providing employees with access to healthy food choices. See tips and suggestions here: <http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cdph/CDPH/BlueprintHealthierVending2013.pdf>.
- **Have written language in the contract** that specifically outlines what strategies the cafeteria or catering services organization will take to increase access to healthy food choices. Communicate regularly with your vendor to ensure that goals and expectations are being met.
- **Partner with vendors** who have a sustained commitment to health and wellness.
- Consider efforts to **train staff** on healthy food preparation strategies.
- Think about the **pros and cons of offering shorter contracts** with vendors (e.g., less than 5 years).

Some recommended guidelines for corporate cafeterias include:

- Do not discount or promote deep-fried options
- Offer half or reduce-size portions when available
- With value meals, offer fruits and vegetables instead of chips or cookies
- Offer desserts with less or no added sugar, such as fruits, apple sauce, and yogurt

Smaller employers, or those without vending services, can consider an “honor system” snack rack. An employee or group of employees can take responsibility for stocking the rack with healthy snacks and collect money in a basket or cash box, and recommended amounts can be posted for various snack items.

### Additional resources



Food selection guidelines in concessions and for vending operations, page 8:

[http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines\\_for\\_Federal\\_Concessions\\_and\\_Vending\\_Operations.pdf](http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines_for_Federal_Concessions_and_Vending_Operations.pdf)

Case study, incorporating dietary guidelines into food service guidelines:

[http://www.cspinet.org/new/pdf/case\\_study\\_humphrey\\_building\\_cafeteria\\_experience\\_may\\_2012.pdf](http://www.cspinet.org/new/pdf/case_study_humphrey_building_cafeteria_experience_may_2012.pdf)



## Healthy meetings

### **Evidence:**

*CDC ScoreCard #36 (1pt)*

*County Health Rankings/scientifically supported:*

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/worksite-obesity-prevention-interventions>

*County Health Rankings/some evidence:*

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/healthy-foods-catered-events>

*Convergence Partnership/recommended:*

<http://www.convergencepartnership.org/atf/cf/%7B245a9b44-6ded-4abd-a392-ae583809e350%7D/PROMISING%20STRATEGIES-07.18.11.PDF>

*Community Guide/recommended:* <http://www.thecommunityguide.org/obesity/workprograms.html>

### **Purpose**

Create a policy that requires healthy food and beverage options to be available in meetings, conferences, and catered events where food is served.

Choosing healthy food and beverage options during meetings and events where food is served is an evidence-based strategy to help employees improve nutrition and to consume more fruits and vegetables. With healthier food options, event and meeting attendees can maintain their energy without having to put extra effort into making healthy choices. Ideally, healthy meeting and events also incorporate physical activity – further helping to maintain participant energy as well as achieve a balance of calories consumed and calories burned. See “Healthy Worksites/Physical Activity” for ways to incorporate physical activity into healthy meetings.

### **Costs and materials**

Staff time will be required to establish a healthy meeting policy as well as plan and implement healthier food options. The costs of healthier foods at meetings and events may not be significantly more expensive than current costs. Staff time may be required in making food purchasing changes or negotiating contracts with catering vendors, and may require hiring a nutritional consultant to advise on policy and vendor contracts.

### **Steps**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program’s Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Identify a champion or team** to create guidelines, and plan and implement healthy food and beverage options at all worksite meeting and activities. If your worksite has a cafeteria and/or catering service, be sure to include staff representatives from food services on the team.
2. **Create a set of healthy meeting guidelines** for internal use and to share with vendors. These guidelines can be based on the Healthy Eating Guidelines in this toolkit, developed in





consultation with a nutrition consultant, or based on existing guidelines or policies. For example, meeting vendor guidelines from the New York State Department of Health (see here:

[https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/inactive/1012090253/attachment\\_15\\_healthy\\_meeting\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/inactive/1012090253/attachment_15_healthy_meeting_guidelines.pdf)) require vendors to:

- a. Offer low-calorie and low fat foods and/or small portions (e.g. bagels cut in halves or quarters).
  - b. Always offer vegetables, fruit, and low-fat milk.
  - c. Include a vegetarian option at all meals.
  - d. Provide no more than a 4-ounce serving of meat.
  - e. Provide pitchers of water.
  - f. Provide at least some whole grain breads and cereals.
  - g. If serving a dessert, provide fresh fruit, fruit crisps, small cookies, or small servings of sorbet
3. **Create an internal list of "preferred vendors"** so that other staff are aware of catering companies who will abide by your healthy meeting food policy and are committed to providing nutritional information for food served.
  4. **Develop menu suggestions** for breakfast, lunch, dinner, boxed meals, and refreshments that fit your company's healthy eating guidelines. This way when other employees plan meetings and events, they have a pre-approved list of acceptable foods and beverages. See the Example section for menu suggestions.
  5. For smaller meetings or companies, your worksite can **develop a list of healthy food and beverage options** that can be kept in stock or easily purchased prior to meetings.
  6. **Work with employees responsible for organizing meetings and events and purchasing food** so that they understand the policy and how to implement it.
  7. **Label healthier options** offered at meetings and events (see "Provide nutritional information").
  8. Sometimes food and beverages are used as incentives to encourage people to attend meetings that are not during mealtimes. Consider not offering food at mid-morning and mid-afternoon meetings, where unnecessary calories and nutrient-poor foods might be consumed. **Brainstorm alternative, non food-related incentives for meeting attendance**, such as company-branded items like reusable water bottles. Do offer water and diet beverages and if food is necessary, provide fruits and vegetables.
  9. **Assess employee satisfaction** in the healthy meetings effort and how improvements can be made.
  10. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

## **Recommended communication activities**



- **Communicate with staff** about the initiation of an effort to offer healthier options at meetings and events, emphasizing that staff tastes and preferences will play a role in policy development and implementation. This helps to minimize resistance to new or different food and beverage offerings.
- **Communicate new meeting guidelines with staff** in the context of the benefits and advantages of eating healthy, and provide an avenue for employees to submit requests for their favorite healthy foods. Clarify who is responsible for meeting and event planning within each department.
- **Prior to events and meetings, ask attendees for dietary requests** such as gluten-free, dairy-free, vegetarian, and vegan. See the Healthy Meetings Guide from the University of South Carolina for tips on accommodating special dietary needs:  
<http://www.sa.sc.edu/healthycarolina/files/2013/09/Healthy-Meetings-Guide-2013-with-bleeds-page-spreads-reduced-file-size.pdf>
- **Make sure your company's healthy eating guidelines are clearly outlined in catering vendor contracts.**
- At meetings and events, **label or provide signage for healthier options**, and provide printouts of nutritional labels for all food served (see "Provide nutritional information").

### Example

Sample guidelines for healthy meetings, with suggestions for healthy foods and beverages, page 31:  
[http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/NCHHealthSmartTlkt/Texts/ES\\_entireworkbook.pdf](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/NCHHealthSmartTlkt/Texts/ES_entireworkbook.pdf)

### Potential evaluation measures

- Number of meetings and events satisfying healthy meeting guidelines
- Number of healthier option foods and beverages consumed at meetings and events (particularly in proportion to less healthy options), measured through fruit/vegetable intake, consumption of lower-sodium options, and/or consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages
- Number of vendors satisfying your worksite's healthy meeting food policy
- Self-reported interest in and satisfaction with healthier options at meetings and events (particularly changes over time)

### Additional resources

Meeting Well, American Cancer Society:

[http://www.acsworkplacesolutions.com/wpspdfs/meetingwell\\_guidebook\\_f251300.pdf](http://www.acsworkplacesolutions.com/wpspdfs/meetingwell_guidebook_f251300.pdf)

Guidelines for Offering Healthy Foods at Meetings, Seminars, and Catered Events from the University of South Carolina: <http://www.sa.sc.edu/healthycarolina/files/2013/09/Healthy-Meetings-Guide-2013-with-bleeds-page-spreads-reduced-file-size.pdf>



Guidelines for Healthy Meetings from New York State Department of Health includes general guidelines and menu suggestions for breakfast, lunch, dinner and refreshments: [https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/inactive/1012090253/attachment\\_15\\_healthy\\_meeting\\_guidelines.pdf](https://www.health.ny.gov/funding/rfa/inactive/1012090253/attachment_15_healthy_meeting_guidelines.pdf)

## Protected break and eating times

### **Evidence:**

*Convergence Partnership/recommended:*

<http://www.convergencepartnership.org/atf/cf/%7B245a9b44-6ded-4abd-a392-ae583809e350%7D/PROMISING%20STRATEGIES-07.18.11.PDF>

### **Purpose**

Provide all employees with ample break and eating times to ensure that employees have time to eat a well-balanced meal and to take exercise and stretch breaks.

Eating rushed, on-the-go meals can lead employees to overeat, eat calorie-dense snacks and meals, or simply make poorer food and beverage choices due to limited time. Additionally, snacking while sitting at a desk can lead to overeating – known as “mindless eating,” this takes focus away from the food (Phyllips, Suzanne, n.d.). Clear policies that provide employees time to purchase or prepare and eat well-balanced meals, as well as a corporate culture that encourages employees to utilize such meal breaks, can increase healthy eating (as well as morale and productivity).

Ideally protected break times are implemented in conjunction with efforts to offer healthy foods at the worksite as well as offer appropriate food preparation and storage space.

### **Costs and materials**

Little cost is associated with protected break and eating times. One point of cost concern might be loss of employee productivity. The United States Department of Labor considers 5- to 20-minute breaks for snacks and coffee part of compensable work hours, while meal breaks (typically lasting 30 or more minutes) are not compensable (US Department of Labor, n.d.). However, studies show that imposing brief breaks during long periods of focus will actually boost productivity (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, 2011). Worksites can benefit from increased productivity while employees can enjoy the benefits of healthier meals.

### **Steps**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program’s Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Identify a team** to develop and implement a break and meal policy, including representatives of management, human resources, and employees.



2. **Assess current policies** and how they might differ for hourly and salaried employees, as well as regulations your company must abide by dependent on the nature of your worksite and roles performed by employees.
3. **Draft a new policy** that encourages employees to take one uncompensated meal break during an 8-hour shift, and 2 compensated snack breaks that are 5 to 20 minutes.
4. **Communicate the new policy to management** and allow opportunity for discussion in order to mitigate concerns or opposition to the policy. Frame the new policy as offering benefits not only to employees, but also to the company in increased productivity. Encourage management to utilize breaks and support their employees in doing so.
5. **Communicate the new policy to employees** with information about the benefits of taking breaks and taking ample time to eat a meal.
6. **Ensure that leadership is “modeling” the new policy** and helping to shape a healthy worksite culture.
7. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

#### **Recommended communication activities**

- **Communicate the benefits of healthy eating and taking the appropriate time to eat a meal** and focus on the food (rather than engaging in “mindless eating”).
- **Share the new policy with employees**, encouraging them to plan healthy meal and snack breaks into their work day as they would plan meetings.
- **Promote the policy** in the context of other policies or supports your worksite has in place to promote healthy eating, such as food preparation and storage space, and the availability of healthy food and beverage options.
- **Regularly remind employees and managers of the policy and its benefits** until it becomes ingrained corporate culture.

#### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Number of breaks taken (self-reported or through timesheets/time clocks)
- Number of breaks at which employees eat (self-reported or based on observation in break rooms or cafeterias)
- Number of healthier foods and beverages consumed (particularly in proportion to less healthy options), measured through fruit/vegetable intake, consumption of lower-sodium options, and/or consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages

#### **Considerations for union and/or organizations with multiple shifts**

- Provide scheduled break time slots so that employees can plan ahead and take breaks at different times if necessary.
- Ensure all shifts are covered and included in efforts to provide breaks.



- Allow sufficient time for breaks and meals.
- Support daily communication of rest and meal break times to employees.



## ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORTS

The Bureau of Labor Statistics states that Americans spend 8.8 hours per day working (Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2013). Creating a work environment that facilitates and supports healthy eating is an effective and sustainable approach to improving employees' nutritional intake for a significant part of their waking hours. Environmental supports not only make the healthy choice the easy choice; they can even make the healthy choice the default choice, as in making drinking water more readily available than other, less healthy options. A supportive environment provides opportunities for employees to practice and reinforce healthy eating behaviors. Providing nutritional information, providing access to food preparation and storage space, offering water and limiting access to sugary beverages, and providing on-site access to fresh fruit and vegetables are some of the ways that worksites can make it easier for employees to eat well during the work day.

### Provide nutritional information

#### **Evidence:**

*CDC ScoreCard #33 (2 pts.)*

*CDC ScoreCard #34 (3 pts.)*

County Health Rankings/Some Evidence: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/healthy-vending-machine-options>

Community Guide/Recommended:

<http://www.thecommunityguide.org/obesity/workprograms.html>

County Health Rankings/Scientifically Supported:

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/worksite-obesity-prevention-interventions>

County Health Rankings/Some Evidence: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/point-decision-prompts-healthy-food-choices>

Convergence Partnership/Recommended:

<http://www.convergencepartnership.org/atf/cf/%7B245a9b44-6ded-4abd-a392-ae583809e350%7D/PROMISING%20STRATEGIES-07.18.11.PDF>

#### **Purpose**

Provide nutritional information (sodium, calories, trans fat, and saturated fat) for foods and beverages offered in vending machines, snack bars, cafeterias, and other locations (including meetings and events) where food is accessible to staff to facilitate healthier choices

As Americans are spending a majority of their time at work, it is vital that worksites help reinforce informed decisions around food consumption. Offering foods properly labeled with nutritional information helps employees make healthier choices while at work and maintain balanced diets during their workday. Worksites can take efforts a step further by categorizing healthier options and clearly identifying them with symbols. Providing such nutritional information along with offering healthy options is key to making the healthy choice the easy choice.



Additionally, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in conjunction with the U.S. General Services Administration have created guidelines for food and beverage offerings at federal facilities.

### **Costs and materials**

There are little to no costs associated with the labeling of foods and beverages in worksite food concessions, and costs related to promotional activities can vary based on the size of your worksite. Costs are primarily related to staff time in planning and implementing the effort, including monitoring all vending to ensure that nutritional labeling is consistently implemented, and additional staff time and/or consulting with a registered dietitian may be required to assess the nutritional content of cafeteria foods.

### **Steps**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program's Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Identify a champion or team** to plan and implement a labeling effort as well as to identify guidelines for healthier foods and beverages. A larger team would be ideal for larger employers that may offer many food and beverage options at work. If your worksite has a cafeteria and/or catering service, be sure to include staff representatives from food services on the team.
2. **Assess needs related to food labeling**, identifying all food concessions at the worksite.
3. **Develop guidelines** for what information to include at various concessions, addressing differing needs at snack bars, vending machines, and cafeterias.
4. **Determine whether your worksite will provide nutritional information only, or create a simple system for identifying healthier options.** One approach is to simply categorize foods and beverages as "healthy" because they satisfy a certain baseline of nutritional requirements. Another approach makes use of a variety of categories, generally based on how often the food or beverage should be consumed in order to maintain a healthy diet (such as the "Go, Slow, Whoa" approach outlined by the National Health Institutes: <http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov/health/public/heart/obesity/wecan/downloads/go-slow-whoa.pdf>).
5. **Planning and implementing nutritional labeling** at snack bars, vending machines, and cafeterias will all require different approaches:
  - Implementing basic nutrition labeling at **snack bars** is relatively easy, as all prepackaged foods require nutritional labels from manufacturers. Your worksite can also provide nutritional information for fruits and vegetables according to the FDA's Nutritional Facts (here for fruits: <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/UCM153464.pdf> and



here for vegetables:

<http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/GuidanceRegulation/ucm063477.pdf>).

When possible, put nutritional and price information near each other.

- Providing nutritional information for foods and beverages in **vending machines** can be done in a few different ways. The simplest is to post caloric information only on or next to the selection (ideally), or post a sign that includes information for all vending options. You can also choose to identify healthier options with symbols, or provide printouts of nutrition labels for every selection.
- In **cafeterias**, all items sold should be labeled with calories per serving, and the following nutritional information should be available in writing on request to consumers:
  - The total number of calories derived from any source
  - The total number of calories derived from the total fat
  - Total fat
  - Saturated fat
  - Cholesterol
  - Sodium
  - Total carbohydrate
  - Sugars
  - Dietary fiber
  - Total protein

Also include food allergen information (learn more at

<http://www.fda.gov/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/ucm079311.htm>)

- At **meetings and events**, label or provide signage for healthier options, and provide printouts of nutritional labels for all food served
6. **Communicate your worksite's nutritional information efforts** to employees prior to its implementation, emphasizing the value of making such information easily available as well as the benefits of healthy eating.
  7. **Ensure that efforts to provide nutritional information are combined with efforts to provide healthy options to employees.**
  8. If possible, **incentivize healthier choices** with reduced prices for healthier food options.
  9. **Kick off labeling efforts with activities** that help employees understand how to interpret nutrition information, promote making healthy choices, and offer opportunities to sample healthier options.
  10. **Add nutritional labeling requirements into the RFP process** to ensure that vendors understand from the beginning the organization's commitment to providing employees with access to healthy food choices and nutritional information. Be sure that any potential vendors provide nutritional data to use in your selection processes. See tips and suggestions here:





<http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cdph/CDPH/BlueprintHealthierVending2013.pdf>.

11. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

### **Recommended communication activities**

- Prior to implementation, **share the initiative with employees** at meetings and through newsletters, email updates, and bulletin boards to help create buy-in and to encourage informed choices about food and beverage selections at work.
- **Coordinate promotional efforts with communication activities** that feature the benefits of healthy eating.
- **Create “point of purchase” signage** at all concessions to draw employees’ attention to the nutritional labels in addition to the healthier food options. See pages 21-26 for examples of signs and labels here:  
<http://www.cityofchicago.org/content/dam/city/depts/cdph/CDPH/BlueprintHealthierVending2013.pdf>.
- **Hold kick off activities at cafeterias and other concessions** that help employees understand the effort, how they can make healthier choices with nutrition information, and allow employees to sample healthier options.
- **Create simple materials** that help employees interpret nutrition labeling and provide basic nutrition guidelines.

### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Number of healthier selections made by employees (particularly in relation to less healthy options and over time)
- Number of healthier foods and beverages consumed, measured through fruit/vegetable intake, consumption of lower-sodium options, and/or consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages
- Self-reported interest in and use of nutrition labeling
- Number of vendors meeting nutritional labeling requirements

### **Additional resources**

Health and sustainability guidelines for federal concessions and vending operations:

[http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines for Federal Concessions and Vending Operations.pdf](http://www.gsa.gov/graphics/pbs/Guidelines%20for%20Federal%20Concessions%20and%20Vending%20Operations.pdf)

Examples of nutrition label posters, page 25-26:

<http://www.eatsmartmovemoreenc.com/Worksites/Toolkit/Eat%20Smart/Eat%20Smart%201-17-12.pdf>

Nutrition label brochure for consumers:



<http://www.choosemyplate.gov/downloads/NutritionFactsLabel.pdf>



## Food preparation and storage space

### **Evidence:**

*CDC ScoreCard #37 (1 pt.)*

### **Purpose**

Provide employees with food preparation and storage areas including microwave oven, sink, refrigerator and/or full kitchen to facilitate healthy eating.

By providing food preparation and storage space, your worksite is offering more options for employees to make healthier choices. Less processed, fresh foods are often the healthier foods, and they may require refrigeration or additional preparation. Kitchens or other amenities allow employees to prepare foods at the worksite or store foods brought from home.

### **Costs and materials**

The costs associated with this intervention can vary widely, though modest efforts to offer food preparation and storage space can be relatively inexpensive to implement, requiring minimal staff time and small investments. Small refrigerators can range in price from approximately \$100-\$200, and microwaves can be purchased for less than \$150. Your worksite must take into account the number of employees who would be using these facilities and accommodate accordingly. Creating a kitchen can be much more costly, requiring full-size appliances and contractual services to build. If your worksite is part of a larger office building, determine if there is a kitchen that can be shared, or whether multiple worksites might be able to collaborate in building and sharing costs of kitchen facilities.

### **Steps**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program's Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Identify a champion or team** to assess, plan, and implement food preparation and storage areas. Make sure that a representative from human resources, facilities, and/or management participates as there may be need to modify worksite facilities.
2. **Assess the current availability, state, and utilization of food preparation and storage areas.**
3. Utilizing an employee survey, **determine if the current needs for food preparation and storage are being met** for employees.
4. Based on survey findings and the budget, explore all options and **develop a plan for improving or creating food preparation and storage areas.** This may simply involve purchasing small appliances and creating a space for them, or it may involve a larger build-out of kitchen facilities. Factor the size of your organization and employee needs into your



planning to ensure that you are providing adequate facilities for everyone's use, such as ample refrigerator and counter space.

5. **Establish maintenance and cleaning schedules** and ensure that someone is responsible for the state of food preparation and storage facilities. Not only do clean facilities foster use; they prevent food-borne illness, which impacts employee productivity and absenteeism. See <http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/docs/dph/mass-in-motion/worksites-wellness-toolkit.pdf>, page 134 for recommended cleaning practices, and <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/index.html> for additional food safety information. Requiring employees to date and label food stored in an on-site refrigerator can also help to maintain food safety and kitchen area cleanliness.
6. **Communicate to employees** the availability of food preparation and storage facilities, their value, and ideas for healthy food preparation.
7. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

#### **Recommended communication activities**

- **Highlight the additional facilities** in company-wide meetings, newsletters, email, and bulletin boards.
- **Create signage** to make employees aware of the locations and features of new food preparation and storage facilities.
- **Promote the benefits of healthy eating** and how the new facilities can help to promote healthy eating.
- **Share ideas and tips** for how employees can bring and prepare healthier foods utilizing the new facilities. This may include simple recipes for foods to bring from home, or ideas for healthy options that can be prepared on site (e.g. salads, sandwiches, and snacks involving fresh fruits and vegetables).

#### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Use of and satisfaction with food preparation and storage areas. This can be assessed through employee surveys and observation.
- Number of healthier foods and beverages consumed (particularly in proportion to less healthy options), measured through fruit/vegetable intake, consumption of lower-sodium options, and/or consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages



## Make water available

### **Evidence:**

County Health Rankings/Some Evidence: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/make-water-available-promote-consumption>

### **Purpose**

Making water available through water fountains, water coolers, and vending machines to increase water consumption and improve health outcomes

Evidence shows that increased water consumption can increase bodily functioning in addition to helping decrease caloric intake during meals (Popkin, D’Anci, & Rosenberg, 2010). Increasing access to drinking water is an important component of employee wellness, particularly given the general widespread availability of sugar-sweetened beverages. Additionally, employees who are dehydrated often experience reduced concentration, which reduces work productivity (Popkin, D’Anci, & Rosenberg, 2010). By offering appealing options for drinking water and promoting water consumption, worksites can effectively promote water consumption.

### **Costs and materials**

Costs associated with the implementation of making water available can vary between water fountains, water coolers, and vending machines. The least costly option is increasing the availability of water in vending machines. This is a free option for the organization, but will cost the employees to purchase the water. Installing water fountains can vary in price depending on the number of fountains and the current access to plumbing. Also, water coolers can vary in price from vendor to vendor. Requesting quotes for water coolers can ensure that your organization receives the best possible pricing.

### **Steps**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program’s Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

- 1. Identify a champion or small team** to assess needs related to drinking water availability, implement a plan to make water more widely available, and promote the benefits of water consumption.
- 2. Assess availability of appealing drinking water options** at your worksite and steps necessary to increase water consumption.
- 3. Request quotes** from appropriate vendors to determine the most affordable and effective options.
- 4. Install the new water system.**
- 5. As part of a healthy meetings policy, offer water at all meetings and events,** particularly as a substitute to sugar-sweetened beverages.



6. **Communicate to employees** the benefits of water consumption and the organization's goal of increasing access within the organization.
7. **Incentivize employees** to consume more water by offering free or low-cost reusable water bottles.
8. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

#### **Recommended communication activities**

- **Highlight the additional facilities** in company-wide meetings, emails, newsletter, and bulletin boards. Feature the benefits of increased water consumption.
- **Create signage** to make employees aware of the locations of new water fountains, coolers and/or vending machines.
- **Make water options highly visible** in meetings and throughout your worksite.

#### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Amount of water consumed by employees (through vending or water coolers)
- Self-reported interest in and consumption of water by employees



## Establish a farmer's market

### **Evidence:**

*CDC ScoreCard #38 (1 pt.)*

County Health Rankings/Some Evidence: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/farmers-marketsstands-low-income-neighborhoods>

County Health Rankings/Expert Opinion: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/mobile-markets>

Convergence Partnership/Recommended:

<http://www.convergencepartnership.org/atf/cf/%7B245a9b44-6ded-4abd-a392-ae583809e350%7D/PROMISING%20STRATEGIES-07.18.11.PDF>

### **Purpose**

Establish a farmer's market or bring healthy food vendors to your worksite to promote healthy eating

Fresh fruits and vegetables contribute to a healthy, balanced diet, and having access to farmer's markets can increase the likelihood of fresh fruit and vegetable consumption (CDC Nutrition, Physical Activity, and Obesity: The CDC Guide to Strategies to Increase the Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables, 2011). If fresh fruits and vegetables are not available in worksite vending machines, snack bars, or cafeterias, a farmer's market or more modest efforts to bring healthy food vendors to your worksite can increase employee access to fresh fruits and vegetables. "Community supported agriculture" may be a simpler and more cost-effective means to bring fresh produce to your employees, involving employees buying into a "share" or "subscription" to a local farmer's product, which is generally delivered or made available at a site a specific time each week or month.

### **Costs and materials**

The establishment of a farmer's market can be resource-intensive in terms of staff time required in the planning, implementation, and holding of the farmer's market on a regular basis. There may be costs associated with the rental or use of space as well as other facilities such as tents and tables. A permit might be required, and some resources will be needed to support marketing efforts. Costs associated with community-sponsored agriculture depend on the number of employees who agree to participate in the program in addition to the size of the organization. A CSA program might be cost-neutral for the organization if individual employees buy into the program, rather than it being subsidized by the worksite.

### **Steps**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program's Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.



1. **Identify a champion or team** to plan and implement a farmer’s market or other method of bringing healthy vendors to your worksite. A representative from human resources or management should be part of the team as there will be budgetary and legal implication for the worksite. Team members should be committed to participating in the farmer’s market and encouraging fellow employees to do so.
  2. **Assess employees’ interest in a farmer’s market** or other strategies to bring fresh fruits and vegetables to the worksite through a survey or focus group. See the CDC moderator’s guide for a focus group:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/downloads/garden\\_market\\_focus\\_group\\_guide.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/downloads/garden_market_focus_group_guide.pdf).
  3. **Gain approval from your city council or any other necessary jurisdiction.** Contact your local government to find out what the protocol is for setting up a farmers' market and what kinds of permitting may be required.
  4. **Identify potential vendors** for a market and negotiate contracts. Some sources for identifying vendors can include:
    - Local First Arizona:  
<http://www.localfirstaz.com/directory/category.php?&catid=1243>
    - Arizona Community Farmers Markets:  
<http://www.arizonacomunityfarmersmarkets.com/>
- Make cost a consideration in the vendors you select, ensuring that at least some vendors will offer prices in line with what your employees are willing to pay.
5. **Select a location** for the market as well as hours that will be convenient for employees.
  6. **Create a communication plan** for the farmer’s market kick-off as well as the ongoing promotion of the market.
  7. **Hold a special kick-off event** to encourage as many employees as possible to become familiar with the market. Offer incentives such as company-branded reusable shopping bags) and food samples to promote interest in the market.
  8. As an alternative to a farmer’s market, **consider buying into Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)**. CSA involves purchasing a “share” of produce from a local farm, generally a bag or box of fresh fruits and vegetables on a weekly basis. Your company might be able to negotiate a regular delivery to your worksite or facilitate a pick up from a CSA site. CSA produce can be utilized at the worksite (through snack bars or cafeterias) or can be intended for employees to consume at home. Learn more about CSA here: <http://www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/pubs/csa/csa.shtml> and how other states have been instituting CSA “Farm to Where You Are” programs here: <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/FarmToWhereYouAre.pdf>. You can also learn more and search for Arizona CSAs here: <http://www.localharvest.org/csa/>.
  9. If bringing a market or vendors to your worksite is not a possibility, **consider bringing employees to a market**. For example, a walking group can make the farmer’s market a





destination, or you can sponsor a weekly outing to a farmer's market to which employees can carpool.

10. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

### **Recommended communication activities**

- **Develop a communication plan** that clearly sets out a timeline for marketing activities for the farmer's market, starting well before the market's kick-off. Utilize company-wide meetings, newsletters, email updates, and billboards.
- **Provide clear information** about the market's hours/day(s), location, vendors, and any other special promotional activities in all communication about the market.
- **Promote the market regularly**, with special emphasis on days prior to the market being held.

### **Example**

CSA example in New York State: <http://www.fledgingcrow.com/worksite-csa/>

### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Number of customers at the farmer's market or participating in CSA
- Dollar amount spent at the farmer's market or CSA
- Satisfaction with the farmer's market or CSA
- Number of servings of fruits and vegetables consumed (survey employees before and after the initiation of the farmer's market)

### **Considerations for different industries and sectors**

Partner with other worksites in your community to create more demand for on-site farm-to-worksite initiatives. Participating worksites can band together to receive farm-fresh local produce at a central location. This can increase access to fresh fruit and vegetables and can address some of the key barriers to increased access to fresh fruit and vegetables. In addition, this provides farmers with a reliable and economically viable marketing outlet. Strategies include:

- Communicate with large employees in your community to determine if they have an on-site farmer's market. If so, contact the farmer(s) who provide their produce to see if they can add your worksite to their delivery route.
- Partner with employees in your office park, campus, or office building to create additional demand for an on-site farmer's market. Share the responsibilities for running, communicating and promoting an on-site farmers market or CSA drop off-site.



- Establish a worksite community garden and allow employees to work the garden and enjoy the produce.

### **Additional resources**

Establishing a Worksite Farmer's Market:

[http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Documents/EstablishingWorksiteFarmersMarket\\_FEB\\_2008FINAL.pdf](http://www.cdph.ca.gov/programs/cpns/Documents/EstablishingWorksiteFarmersMarket_FEB_2008FINAL.pdf)

Worksite Farmer's Market How-to Guide:

[https://www.hap.org/employers/worksite/pdfs/farmers\\_market.pdf](https://www.hap.org/employers/worksite/pdfs/farmers_market.pdf)

Additional resources and white papers:

<http://www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/healthyfood/markets.htm>



## AWARENESS AND EDUCATIONAL EFFORTS

Building awareness about the value of healthy eating and educating employees so that they can make healthier choices is an important component of a multi-strategy effort to increase healthy eating. Awareness and educational efforts can help to get attention, shape attitudes, contribute to healthy norms or worksite culture, and build skills so that individuals can eat healthier. Educational efforts can offer employees some of the “tools” they need to in order to make healthy choices, such as understanding of how diet is related to overall health and how to read and use nutritional labels.

Information and education are often the foundation for the success of other complementary strategies, such as in building understanding of the value of healthy food choices so that employees opt for healthier choices in meetings or vending machines. However, awareness or educational efforts alone have limited effect given that they rely solely on individuals making the healthy choice, rather than the healthy choice being the easiest or most affordable choice, for example. Awareness and educational strategies should ideally support other strategies and be part of an overall healthy worksites plan that utilizes multiple strategies.

### Healthy food tasting

#### **Evidence:**

County Health Rankings/Some Evidence: <http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/taste-testing-fruits-vegetables>

#### **Purpose**

To provide employees with opportunities to sample healthy foods in the effort to expose them to new, healthy foods and help develop tastes for such foods

Healthy food tastings are often successfully implemented in the school setting, but your employees have likely sampled new foods at grocery stores in an effort to introduce new products and demonstrate their appeal. Tasting events or activities are most effective when combined with other healthy eating interventions, such as offering healthy foods at company food concessions or awareness and educational efforts. Healthy food tastings can have the added benefit of encouraging parents to expose their children to new foods and allow them to sample, which can help to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables (County Health Rankings and Roadmaps, 2014).

#### **Costs and materials**

This is a low-cost and overall low-investment way to complement other healthy eating interventions, requiring only minimal staff time and foods to try.

#### **Steps**



Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program’s Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Incorporate healthy tastings into other healthy eating interventions** being planned and implemented by healthy worksites champions and/or teams.
2. **Identify opportunities to do food sampling** where healthy foods are already being offered, such as in the cafeteria or at a farmer’s market, or as a complement to other activities; for example, doing a brief cooking demonstration and tasting of healthy recipes at new kitchen facilities.
3. Your worksite can **also try a variation on a healthy food tasting**, by sponsoring a “cook-off” or “taste-off” where employees bring in samples of their own healthy recipes. You can select a theme (such as cooking with fresh vegetables) or particular cuisine.
4. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

#### **Recommended communication activities**

- Food tasting or sampling can serve as an incentive for participation in other healthy eating activities. **Feature the food tasting in promotional activities** when promoting relevant events or initiatives
- **Create clear signage** at events leading people to food sampling, and provide people with the opportunity to either purchase the food or, if a recipe, provide takeaway recipe flyers.
- Experiment with how much emphasis you put on the “healthy” nature of healthy foods. While introducing people to foods that contribute to a balanced diet is a goal, some people equate “healthy” with not tasting good. Emphasize taste and the fun in trying new things.

#### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Number of people who participated in tastings
- Number of people who report liking the food being tested or report willingness to try new foods



## Healthy eating informational materials

### **Evidence:**

CDC ScoreCard #39 (1pt): Provide brochures, videos, posters, pamphlets, newsletters, or other written or online information that address the benefits of healthy eating

### **Community Guide/Recommended:**

<http://www.thecommunityguide.org/obesity/workprograms.html>

### **Purpose**

Motivate employees to eat healthier by increasing awareness about dietary guidelines, nutrition, and the benefits they can enjoy by eating healthy foods.

This intervention provides information to employees about the recommended dietary guidelines and the benefits of healthy eating. Awareness and education efforts can be implemented alone or ideally as a complement to other worksite strategies promoting healthy eating, but should always offer employees resources and information for how to eat healthier. Individuals are responsible for instituting and maintaining the lifestyle changes necessary to reduce risk and improve health; however, individual behavior is determined to a large extent by the social environment (such as the policies, worksite culture, and other social norms surrounding them). Education efforts can have the added benefit of helping to shape positive social norms around healthy eating, particularly if you feature individual success stories as part of your effort.

### **Costs and materials**

Costs associated with this communication effort are minimal. Some staff time is required to plan and implement the intervention, and to be most appealing to employees, a graphic designer would create any promotional pieces. Your worksite may have internal graphic design capacity or an employee may be able to offer their amateur graphic design skills. You may choose to produce any materials on a color printer at your worksite to minimize production costs.

### **Implementation activities**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program's Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Engage your wellness coordinator, a champion, or small team** to plan and implement this promotional effort. Team members should be enthusiastic "ambassadors" of messages promoting the benefits of physical activity.
2. **Identify opportunities** for employees to prepare and eat healthy foods at work – such as concessions that offer healthy options, or kitchen areas that can be used to prepare foods - that can be promoted as part of your efforts.
3. **Plan and implement your communication campaign** (see "Recommended communication activities"). See "Additional resources" below for information about



recommended dietary guidelines and the benefits of healthy eating. Consider different creative approaches, such as featuring employee success stories. You can adapt from this Success Story Data Collection Tool: CDC Steps to Wellness page 111:

[http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/downloads/steps2wellness\\_broch14\\_508\\_tag508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/downloads/steps2wellness_broch14_508_tag508.pdf)

4. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

### **Recommended communication activities**

- **Create a simple communication plan** that outlines the information you intend to share, through what formats and channels, and the timeframe. The plan should also establish goals and objectives to help provide structure. Try to coordinate communication activities with seasonal activities, relevant community events, health awareness months (see <http://healthfinder.gov/NHO/>), and worksite happenings. The ideal approach is:
  - To provide general wellness programming to all employees at least once a month
  - To use at least three formats and channels (see below) to promote the benefits of healthy eating
  - To annually review communication and promotion vehicles for effectiveness and cost
- **Consider your company intranet, employee newsletters, bulletin boards, and well-trafficked areas** such as a break room, cafeteria, or human resources office as channels to share your message.
- **Create on-line articles, posters, handouts, or flyers** to go into pay stub envelopes are good options for format.
- **Ensure enough repetition of messages** so that employees see and hear each message several times (generally required in order for a message to be truly received).
- **Offer employees resources and information** about healthy eating whether on or off the worksite.
- **Develop culturally appropriate and sensitive messaging** addressing the link between healthy eating and other lifestyle modifications and the decrease in risk of chronic diseases (such as obesity and heart disease; see “Healthy eating guidelines and benefits of healthy eating”).

### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Changes in awareness about the recommended dietary guidelines and the benefits of healthy eating
- Intention to engage in healthy eating



- Number of healthier foods and beverages consumed, measured through fruit/vegetable intake, consumption of lower-sodium options, and/or consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages

**Additional resources**

Informational handouts, page 42-83

[http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/NCHHealthSmartTlkt/Texts/ES\\_entireworkbook.pdf](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/NCHHealthSmartTlkt/Texts/ES_entireworkbook.pdf)

Poster ideas, page 86-88:

[http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/NCHHealthSmartTlkt/Texts/ES\\_entireworkbook.pdf](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/NCHHealthSmartTlkt/Texts/ES_entireworkbook.pdf)



## Provide seminars, workshops, and classes

### **Evidence:**

CDC ScoreCard #40 (2 pts): Provide a series of educational seminars, workshops, or classes on nutrition

### **Purpose**

To offer employees more in-depth information and build skills to help increase healthy eating

Whatever you may choose to call them – workshops, brown bags, lunch-and-learns – such educational events are intended to build interest in healthy eating, provide resources, and build skills so that more employees can engage in healthier eating. Ideally your worksite can offer such educational events as part of a broader effort to healthy eating, inclusive of policies, environmental supports, and employee-offered health benefits.

### **Costs and materials**

Offering educational events such as workshops, classes, or “brown bag” lunches can be low-cost. In addition to staff costs of planning and implementing the events, speaker fees and refreshments may be the only direct costs. Depending on the resources you are able to identify, you may be able to avoid speaker fees, and refreshments can be as simple as beverages and fresh fruit.

### **Implementation activities**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program’s Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Engage your wellness coordinator, a champion, or small team** to plan and implement this educational effort. Team members should be enthusiastic “ambassadors” of messages promoting the benefits of healthy eating.
2. **Select the areas you want to address through educational events.** You might start by assessing available resources or by surveying employees for their interests and preferences. Some topics to consider include: recommended dietary guidelines, reading nutrition labels, tips for creating healthier meals and snacks, and cooking demonstrations.
3. **Identify the resources** you can tap into for speakers who can address a variety of topics or others who can help with activities. It is possible that there are employees with a background in nutrition, or maybe an employee who is an accomplished cook could help assist with a cooking demonstration. Reach out to local health departments, hospitals, fitness centers, your health insurer, and other community-based organizations for speakers.
4. **Identify the best time of day to offer educational events** from the perspective of employees and managers. Lunchtime can be an ideal time to offer a healthy meal or snack as an incentive for participation and can help to minimize any management concerns about employees’ on-the-clock time. Flex time can also be used for events.





5. **Ensure that speakers understand who they will be addressing**, including demographics of your employees, the type of work they do, and the general work environment.
6. **Identify further resources** you will be able to offer employees who participate in the event and want to learn more about eating healthy. Speakers may be able to provide brochures or handouts. Ensure that you offer resources specific to the topic; for example, when sharing information about reading nutrition labels, provide a takeaway flyer that outlines nutrition labels. Recipe flyers are ideal for cooking demonstrations.
7. **Determine the best time of day to offer the educational event.** Lunch is often the best time because it is a natural break in the day for many employees. You can also offer educational events “on the clock” during work hours. Offering lunch or refreshments – particularly for cooking demonstrations – can help increase participation.
8. **Promote the educational event** through multiple channels, such as employee newsletters, posters, and at meetings.
9. If you are able to offer multiple events, assess the effectiveness of each event to help make improvements to future events.
10. **Evaluate success** in how the intervention was implemented, participation in the intervention, and whether the intervention helped to meet your healthy worksite objectives.

### **Recommended communication activities**

- **Promote educational events** by highlighting what employees can gain from participating: For example, new information, familiarity with new foods, or how easy it can be to incorporate healthy eating tips into one’s diet. Tie the event in with seasonal activities or worksite happenings, if possible. Feature any incentives you may be offering for participation.

### **Opportunities for incentives**

- Refreshments
- Raffle item for participants (for example, a gift card to a grocery store, farmer’s market, or kitchen store)
- Company-branded items such as cooking utensils or measuring cups

### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Changes in knowledge or intention to eat healthier (such as with a pre- and post-test)
- Effectiveness of the presentation (measured through a post-presentation feedback form)
- Number of healthier foods and beverages consumed, measured through fruit/vegetable intake, consumption of lower-sodium options, and/or consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages

### **Considerations for shift workers**



- Offer the trainings or seminars at different times on different days so that workers have maximum flexibility in deciding when to attend.
- Don't forget about night or weekend workers. All employees should have access to educational seminars during regular work hours.
- Schedule back-to-back sessions at the end of one shift and the beginning of the next one to maximize scheduling and reduce costs.
- Record seminars or sessions so that employees can watch on their own time.
- Offer a train the trainer session so that managers or employees can learn the material and deliver the training at a later date.
- Consider offering on-line trainings

### **Additional resources**

Feedback form:

CDC Steps to Wellness, page 107:

[http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/downloads/steps2wellness\\_broch14\\_508\\_tag508.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpao/hwi/downloads/steps2wellness_broch14_508_tag508.pdf)

Examples of nutrition label posters, page 25-26:

<http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com/Worksites/Toolkit/Eat%20Smart/Eat%20Smart%201-17-12.pdf>

Find nutrition professionals:

Information on multiple nutrition topics, or to find a Registered Dietitian:

<http://www.eatright.org/Public/landing.aspx?TaxID=6442451979>



## EMPLOYER-OFFERED HEALTH BENEFITS

Your worksite can encourage healthy eating as part of an overall compensation package including health insurance coverage as well as other services or discounts related to employee health. Such benefits can vary widely and be modest to more costly in terms of employer investment, from as simple as identifying and offering an employee health insurance package that includes coverage, subsidies, or discounts for nutritional counseling to participating in a weight management program. A strategy requiring more worksite resources but that may yield greater results is offering counseling and management programs right at the worksite where employees spend substantial time and consume a significant portion of their daily calories.

### Free or subsidized self-management for healthy eating

**Evidence:**

CDC ScoreCard #41 (2 pts): Provide free or subsidized self-management programs for healthy eating

**County Health Rankings/Scientifically Supported:**

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/policies/worksite-obesity-prevention-interventions>

**Community Guide/Recommended:**

<http://www.thecommunityguide.org/obesity/workprograms.html>

### **Purpose**

To offer employees information about their health-related risks and counseling to change behaviors that will improve their health

Assessing individual employees' health risks, including feedback and education, has been shown to improve individuals' fat intake, cholesterol, and blood pressure. Your worksite can offer individual counseling sessions for employees with risk factors for diet-related chronic illness. Such counseling provides skills, motivation, and support to change diet and food prep habits. Worksites can also offer a weight management and/or healthy eating program or utilize other community resources.

This intervention generally involves an assessment of personal health habits and risk factors (that may also include biometric measures such as body mass index, cholesterol, etc.), an assessment of future risk of death or other adverse health outcomes, and feedback including educational messages and counseling about how changing one's behavior can change the risk of disease or death. An assessment of health risks with feedback (AHRF) can be implemented as a stand-alone strategy or more ideally as part of a broader program that includes health education and other health promotion components offered as follow-up to the assessment (The Guide to Community Preventive Services, 2014). Counseling and education can include setting personalized goals and monitoring progress, building social support for healthy behaviors (including at the worksite),



developing problem-solving strategies for maintaining healthy behaviors, and reinforcing behaviors with rewards (CDC Workplace Health Promotion: Physical Activity, 2014). Activities following the assessment can be implemented through coaching or counseling, or through self-management programs. Employee health screenings can also serve to identify individuals who can benefit from disease management services.

### **Costs and materials**

Costs for dietary assessments, follow up, and other activities supporting individual change can vary widely depending on the depth of the assessment and the extent of follow up services your worksite provides. Significant staff time, particularly from a wellness coordinator and/or human resources staff member, will be required in the planning and implementation of assessments and follow up. Ongoing administration of the follow-up activities will likely be required as well. You may be able to utilize resources from your health insurance carrier or business coalitions or professional associations for either assessments and/or follow-up services. There may be costs associated with self-management programs or coaching, which your worksite may or may not offer. Costs related to communication activities and incentives can be minimal.

### **Steps**

Use the Healthy Arizona Worksites Program's Worksite Health Improvement Plan to outline tasks and timeframe, who is responsible, and communication and evaluation activities.

1. **Identify a human resources staff person or wellness coordinator** to plan and implement the intervention. A larger team can help to plan and coordinate, particularly related to follow-up educational efforts and/or health promotion interventions such as fitness classes or activities for employees.
2. **Determine what screenings or exams will be assessing or measuring**, such as a health risk appraisal and/or biometrics like body mass index, cholesterol, and heart rate. Screenings can also include conditions such as diabetes and cancer, for example. Your budget or available resources may influence the kinds and extent of screenings you are able to offer, as well as the follow-up counseling you can provide.
3. **Identify the product you want to offer your employees**, such as feedback in the form of a written report, online feedback, and/or feedback in individual or group meetings. Then identify resources or partner organizations to implement screenings and counseling or coaching. Local health departments, community health centers, and other clinics may serve as partners. Your company's insurance provider may offer recommendations, and business health councils or coalitions can also offer recommendations and/or services. Counseling or coaching can be conducted by individual experts or by companies that provide coaching via telephone. Coaching can focus on nutrition specifically and/or a broader wellness approach that addresses the results of health risk appraisals and other behaviors such as physical activity.



4. **Ensure that your worksite can offer resources and supports** to help individuals act on their assessment and any individual plan or goals that may be put in place. Tailor the screening and overall assessment product to the follow-up resources your worksite can offer.
5. **Work with your human resources or legal departments to ensure that any specific information collected complies with HIPAA** (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) privacy and security rules (see <http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/privacy/hipaa/understanding/>). Identify a space to conduct the exams or screenings that allows for employee privacy and confidentiality.
6. **Ensure that you are prepared to provide information should health conditions or other concerns be uncovered.** Local health departments, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Institutes of Health, your company's health insurance provider, and other national organizations such as the American Heart Association may offer free materials.
7. **Promote voluntary wellness exams or screenings** as drop-in or schedule exams with interested employees. Start promotional efforts several weeks before the scheduled date(s).
8. **Offer exams or screenings** on one day or across a period of several days and promote them as they are being conducted to achieve as much employee participation as possible.
9. If your worksite offers counseling or coaching, **promote the resource before, during, and after exams or screenings** take place.
10. **Offer worksite activities** that help to create social support for employees to engage in healthy behaviors. Promote other worksite interventions of all types (policies, benefits, and environmental supports) that can help individuals reach fitness goals.

#### **Recommended communication activities**

- **Promote dietary assessments** starting several weeks before their implementation. Emphasize the resources that will be offered as part of your program, such as education, counseling, coaching, and other worksite activities that will promote healthy eating. It is important that employees know there will be support at the worksite for changing their behavior.
- **Be clear about what the assessment will measure and what kind of feedback will be offered, as well as the confidential nature of the assessment,** in order to increase employee's comfort level and create expectations for the kind of information that will be learned.
- If possible, **offer the assessment periodically** in order to reach employees when they are at a stage of "readiness" to engage in the assessment.
- **Engage in employee education efforts** that help support healthy behaviors. This can include awareness-building about the benefits of healthy eating, resources for healthy eating, and employee success stories.



- **Promote healthy eating opportunities at the worksite for employees** as opportunities for employees to achieve their own personal goals
- **Utilize employee newsletters, email, meetings, and posters and written materials** in high-traffic areas (such as a break room or cafeteria) for your promotional and educational efforts.

### **Opportunities for incentives**

- One-time incentives, such as water bottles or T-shirts, can be offered to those who engage in the assessment process.
- Higher-value items or cash rewards can serve as incentives as individuals reach milestones in their individual plans and/or engage in worksite activities that promote healthy eating (such as planning a successful healthy meeting). These kinds of incentives may be built into a packaged follow-up or coaching program, or you may build them into your worksite's customized program.

### **Potential evaluation measures**

- Number of employee assessments
- Number of employees who participate in assessments
- Number of counseling sessions
- Number of employees who participate in counseling sessions
- Number of healthier foods and beverages consumed, measured through fruit/vegetable intake, consumption of lower-sodium options, and/or consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages



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