Eating Healthy at Work

HEALTHY EATING IN THE WORKPLACE

Eating healthy can not only protect you from conditions like obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease, but is good for your mental health and can fuel you throughout the day.

TIPS TO GET STARTED

• **Plan ahead!** Use your weekends or time off to plan your lunches for the week and get the ingredients you need. A local greenmarket might be a good place to find organic produce.

• **Take an actual break to eat your lunch.** Taking a break is sometimes hard to do but it decreases stress, can give you time to move and stretch, talk to others, and refresh your mind.

• **Choose water.** Drink water instead of sugary beverages like juice or soda. How much water a person should drink depends on age, sex, pregnancy, and other factors, but those whose jobs require physical activity or sun exposure should keep water on hand.

• **Practice "mindful" eating.** Put away your phone and step away from your workstation. Find a place where you can focus on what you are eating and how you feel. This can help you enjoy your meal more and prevent overeating.
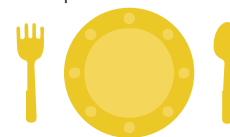
• **Buy reusable containers to pack your lunch.** Find food and beverage containers that are BPA and phthalate-free. BPA and phthalates are chemicals often found in plastic products and can interfere with how some organ systems work. Pregnant women and children are especially vulnerable to these chemicals.
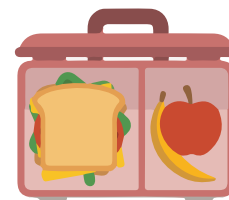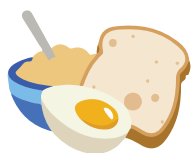
• **Adjust diet for shift work.** If you are a shift worker, try to stick to a normal day pattern of food intake (eating "dinner" before your shift and "breakfast" at end of shift). Drink water regularly and keep caffeinated beverages to the beginning of your shift.

IDEAS FOR HEALTHY MEALS

Breakfast
Eat a healthy, protein-filled breakfast to provide fuel for your day.

Examples: whole wheat toast with peanut butter or avocado, eggs, smoothies, oatmeal

Snacks
It's easy to start craving snacks in the middle of the work day. Skip the cookies and donuts at work and pack some snacks from home.

Examples: nuts and seeds, popcorn, low-fat yogurt, fruit, crackers

Lunch
A healthy lunch doesn't have to be complicated! Fill half your meal with organic fruits and vegetables and choose lean proteins (or fish, tofu, and legumes) and whole grains.
Limit salt, sugar, and saturated fat.

HOW CAN AN EMPLOYER ENCOURAGE HEALTHY EATING?
• Provide social spaces like a lunchroom or breakroom where employees can eat.
• Stock vending machines with healthy snacks.
• Provide nutritious foods at meetings and break rooms.
• Support Lunch and Learn programs where employees can share recipes or learn from a nutritionist.
• Supply kitchen appliances like a microwave and fridge to encourage employees to bring food from home.

The information is for educational purposes only and is not intended as a substitute for medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health care provider with any questions you have regarding your medical care.