

Appetite for Knowledge



WELLNESS AT WORK: FOOD AND ACTIVITY TIPS FOR MEETINGS AND MORE!

We spend many of our waking hours at work, often in meetings. Further, there is good evidence that the choices we are presented with (and how they are presented) have a strong influence on the decisions we make. This is true for both food and physical activity choices. Increasing opportunities for healthful choices at work can increase the positive health habits that improve health.

When working to shift health habits it is good to have some guidance. The following is a brief outline of general food and activity recommendations. These are a great framework for guiding healthy practices inside and outside of the workplace.

NUTRITION

- Increase choices of fruits, vegetables and whole grains
- Choose low-fat dairy when possible
- Limit added sugars, salt, and saturated fats

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

- 2.5 hours moderate intensity aerobic activity (or 1.25 hours vigorous). This doesn't need to be all at once - even just 10 minutes at-a-time is great!

- 2 or more days per week that include muscle strengthening activities

MEETINGS AND OTHER GATHERINGS

When organizing a meeting or work function a good first question is "Do we even need to serve food or beverages?" For shorter events the answer is often 'no', but in some cases water, coffee, and/or tea may be appropriate. Plain water is fine, though 'infusing' the water with fruits, vegetables, herbs, or spices is sometimes a nice touch. (check out some great infused water recipes below!). Try to avoid offering sugar-sweetened beverages, if possible. If a meal or snacks are needed, here are a few good tips for encouraging positive food choices:

- Serve vegetables with hummus for a snack
- Place fruits and vegetables first in a buffet line
- Serve salad dressings and condiments on the side
- Serve fruit for dessert
- Use smaller plates, bowls, and serving utensils, when appropriate, to encourage participants to serve - and eat - a bit less (it really works!)

JANUARY 10, 2018

FLAVORED WATER RECIPES

Increasing physical activity can be as simple as encouraging use of stairs instead of elevators, for those that are physically able. You can have organized walking groups during meeting breaks – or even walking meetings! For longer events it is helpful to provide opportunities in the agenda for safe physical activity choices appropriate for all skill and fitness levels.

Practices that support access to healthy foods, beverages, and activity choices will encourage healthier lifestyles. These practices can be encouraged in a number of ways. Some workplaces have policies that outline expectations for food and activity choices. Others may sign on to resolutions or value statements. Some workplaces do great without any of these formalities – there are many excellent ways to cultivate wellness in the workplace!

If you would like more information on healthy meetings and healthy workplaces here are a few good resources to get you started:

- [Fresh Approaches](#) and [Healthy Meeting Practices](#) (UW Extension Handouts)
- [Planning Healthy Meals for Meetings](#) (Ohio State Extension Web Resources)
- [Healthy Meeting Toolkit](#) (National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity)
- [Tips for Healthy Options and Physical Activity at Workplace Meetings and Events](#) (National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion)

What you need:

- Pitcher of water
- Spoon to stir
- Any combination of fruits, vegetables, or herbs

Instructions:

1. Wash and cut up all of your ingredients.
2. Add to a pitcher (1/2 gallon) of water.
3. Use a wooden spoon to stir all of the ingredients and mash them up slightly to release flavor.
4. For the best flavor, allow the water to sit in the refrigerator overnight or for a couple of hours before drinking.

Tips:

- Peel the citrus fruits from their skin to avoid a bitter taste.
- Use thin slices or small cubes so the flavor will infuse more quickly.
- Gently tear, rub or crush the leaf of herbs to release the natural extracts and oils.
- Herbs that work well are basil, cilantro, mint, parsley, rosemary and thyme



real
FOOD

Minty Cucumber Lime

1 sliced cucumber
½ sliced lime
¼ cup fresh mint leaves



Watermelon Mint

1 cup cubed watermelon
¼ cup fresh mint leaves



Strawberry-Lemon with Basil

1 cup sliced strawberries
1 sliced lemon
¼ cup fresh basil



Blueberry Orange

1 cup blueberries
1 sliced orange



Strawberry-Cucumber

1 cup sliced strawberries
1 sliced cucumber



Apple-Cinnamon

2 thinly sliced apples
4 cinnamon sticks



Citrus Cucumber

1 sliced cucumber
1 sliced lemon
1 sliced orange



Honeydew Lime

2-3 slices ripe honeydew melon
1 sliced lime
4 sprigs mint



Mixed Berry

2 cups any combination of berries, including: strawberries, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries. Add lemon or lime if desired.



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Issued in furtherance of extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Kelly Crane, director, University of Wyoming Extension, University of Wyoming, Laramie, Wyoming 82071.

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