



# Meeting **Healthy**

Meeting Healthy reflects our desire to develop a Model Community by supporting the good health of our associates and promoting mission-focused stewardship.

Whether your meeting lasts a few hours or a few days, Meeting Healthy is designed to make it easier for meeting participants to eat well and be active. It means that healthy food choices will always be available.

The ideas presented here encourage meeting planners to provide a variety of food choices that can help meeting attendees maintain a healthy balance all day. In addition, Meeting Healthy offers advice on selecting foods that promote high energy to keep meeting attendees alert. Because most meetings are arranged so that participants sit for long periods of time, Meeting Healthy also suggests a variety of tactics to help attendees stay active throughout the meeting, such as walks and exercise breaks.

Finally, Meeting Healthy recommends that we respect the environment through tactics such as serving food and beverages buffet style rather than individually packaged, and considering those less fortunate by making plans for leftover food.

## 1 Good General Nutrition

### A. Nutrition Labels

- Have the caterer label food items with the name of the food at a minimum. Better yet, provide nutrition labels showing calories and grams of fat per serving.

### B. Breakfast and Brunch

Simple changes to meals and snacks can give your meeting attendees power-packed, disease-fighting nutrients:

- Whole fruit, fruit salad, fruit spreads, fruit or nut toppings (raisins, dried fruit mix, fresh strawberries, bananas, blueberries, sliced fresh peaches) for hot and cold cereals, pancakes, waffles and crepes
- 100% juices and water
- Skim or low-fat milk in addition to half-and-half for coffee and tea
- Yogurt (especially Greek yogurt)
- Whole-grain breads, high-fiber cereals such as bran flakes and low-fat granola
- Mini bagels and muffins rather than full size
- Vegetables such as mushrooms, peppers, onions, tomatoes and spinach for omelet fillings or as additions to scrambled eggs

- Canadian bacon or turkey/chicken sausage
- Limited fried foods such as hash browns

### C. Breaks

- 100% juices and water
- Fruit and vegetable dips (especially those containing cheese or Greek yogurt)
- Fruit smoothies or low-fat frozen yogurt-based milkshakes
- Tortilla chips with bean dip and salsa
- Pretzels, hot pretzels with mustard, trail mix
- Cookies or other sweets in smaller portions with fresh fruit and cheese kabobs



### D. Lunch and Dinner

- Whole-grain breads, pasta, quinoa or brown rice as sides or in salads
- Pastas with tomato, pesto or other vegetable-based sauces
- Salad dressings on the side and low-fat dressing options
- Reduced-fat cheese in items such as vegetable lasagna
- Broth, vegetable or bean-based soups instead of cream soups
- Fruit with every meal
- At least two vegetables with each meal, and seasoning with fresh herbs
- Dried fruit such as cranberries, raisins or apricots added to rice dishes
- Chicken, turkey, fish and shellfish are preferred over beef or pork
- Limit red meat (beef, pork and lamb) to 4-ounce servings
- Steamed, poached, baked and broiled meats
- Vegetarian alternatives at all meals
- No fried foods such as french fries, onion rings or fried chicken

## E. Appetizers

- Raw vegetables and low-fat dip
- Pretzels, nuts, baked tortilla chips, bean dip and salsa, popcorn
- Reduced-fat cheese assortment with whole-grain crackers or, if serving fattier cheeses, serve smaller-portion cubes
- Hummus and pita bread
- Baked artichoke or spinach dip made with low-fat mayo, served with whole-grain crackers or in a pumpernickel or wheat bread bowl
- Roasted red peppers on thinly-sliced Italian bread

## F. Desserts

- Fresh fruit with chocolate and/or caramel dipping sauce, fruit cobbler or pies
- Oatmeal raisin cookies, fig bars, brownies/carrot cake made with applesauce instead of oil, cake garnished with fruit puree
- Frozen yogurt, sorbet or reduced-fat ice cream
- Small portions of high-calorie desserts

## 2 Healthy Food Tips for Energy

If you've become drowsy after eating a bagel for breakfast or a bowl of pasta for lunch, you know how the foods you eat affect the way you feel. Within two to three hours after eating high-carbohydrate foods, you tend to feel tired.

Eating foods high in protein helps you feel more alert and able to concentrate.

To offer associates more energy that lasts evenly throughout the day, include all food groups---fruits and vegetables, grains, and protein, and offer snacks containing protein, fiber and fat (in reasonable amounts), rather than carbohydrates (grains or sugar) alone.

**Consider these examples:**

### A. Meals

- Cereal with low-fat or Greek yogurt for breakfast
- Grilled chicken salad for lunch
- Seafood and pasta for dinner
- If serving packaged or pre-portioned meals, try to observe this ratio: 40 percent grains, 40 percent fruits and vegetables, 20 percent protein



### B. Breaks

Instead of:

- Popcorn and pretzels
- Tortilla chips and salsa
- Crackers
- Cookies and brownies

Try:

- Popcorn and nuts
- Tortilla chips, salsa, and bean dip
- Crackers and cheese
- Brownies and fruit

## 3 Activity/Exercise

Although the foods you serve are an important part of keeping participants alert, enthused and energized during meetings, incorporating physical activity/exercise is important to keep participant energy levels high. Sitting and listening to presentations session after session, day after day, can leave participants restless, inattentive, and feeling drained. Use the tips listed below to add energy to the meeting agenda:

- Select a location that makes it easy and safe for participants to walk outdoors; provide maps of nearby attractions and walking trails
- Encourage walking during meeting breaks, to dinner or entertainment
- Organize a walking group in the morning or during the dinner break
- Recommend participants take the stairs instead of the elevator
- Incorporate short stretch breaks (with guided stretches) between presentations
- Select hotels that have an on-site fitness facility
- Arrange for an early morning fitness class or have a 15-minute exercise session in the afternoon during the meeting
- Provide incentives by giving prizes for those who are active 30 minutes a day

## 4 Environmental Stewardship

There are two major benefits of planning green meetings: decreased cost and increased environmental stewardship.

### A. Food and Beverage

- Use stoneware for all food and beverages rather than plastics
- Have your food and beverage service provider use bulk dispensers for sugar, salt, pepper, cream and other condiments
- Instead of serving bottled water, use water stations near meeting room locations
- Offer fair trade, shade grown, organic coffee
- Request organic produce, and free range chicken/eggs/meats

### B. Supplies

- Recycle event supplies such as name badge sleeves and lanyards
- Upload presentations to a website rather than printing handouts; print materials double-sided

### C. Hotel and Transportation

- Reduce distances traveled by speakers and delegates
- Arrange for carpooling or shuttles
- Locate the hotel and dinner venue within walking distance of each other

- Consider using TelePresence or other technology rather than an in-person meeting when appropriate
- Consider that the final attendance count will likely be lower than the registrations, and order slightly less food to limit waste
- Allow attendees to build their own box lunches; arrange to pay for only what was consumed
- Plan in advance to have leftover food donated to a local food bank or soup kitchen, or ask if leftover food portions can be composted or shipped to a local farm as animal feed
- Request availability of recycling containers throughout the hotel

## 5 Emergency Planning

Part of having a healthy meeting is being prepared for medical or other emergencies of your attendees and staff.

- Have emergency contact information on all attendees accessible to the registration team on-site as well as the System Office or home office location
- Discuss in advance with the hotel its evacuation plans and how other emergencies are handled; inform attendees of emergency plans
- Discuss in advance with the hotel the nearest pharmacy, urgent care center and hospital

# Meeting Healthy Checklist

- Have you built activity** into your meeting by selecting a hotel or meeting venue that has a workout facility or choosing an off-site event that requires walking?
- Have you ensured that healthy food options** are offered at your meeting by doing the following:
  - requesting the caterer to provide you with menus that promote good nutrition and high energy
  - requesting the caterer work with you on portion sizes, using low-fat ingredients, dressings on the side and other methods
  - choosing menus that include all food groups for meals (for example, offering protein and vegetables at breakfast and carbohydrates and proteins at all breaks)
  - participating in a food tasting with the caterer to make sure you have not selected foods that are fried and otherwise not good nutritionally
- Have you accommodated the needs** of your meeting attendees with special diets by doing the following:
  - surveying your group and ordering vegetarian plates or other items for attendees with special diets
  - instructing the caterer to label the food with nutrition information so that attendees with special diets can plan accordingly
- Are you serving drinks** in pitchers rather than individual bottles?
- Do you have a plan for donating** or putting the leftover food to good use?
- Have you prepared for emergencies** by doing the following:
  - having attendee emergency contact information accessible to the registration team on-site and home office location
  - informing attendees of hotel emergency plans
  - locating the nearest pharmacy, urgent care center and hospital