



# Healthy Catering and Event Guide





## Healthy Catering and Event Guide

### **Background...**

*The Office of Preventive Health (OPH) is committed to promoting the health and well-being of Mississippians. We promote healthy lifestyles and regular physical activity through our programs, community work and special projects.*

*Due to the strong relationship between diet, health and increasing rates of overweight and obesity as well as other chronic diseases affecting Mississippians, the Mississippi State Department of Health makes supporting healthy food choices at work part of our commitment to health. It is fitting for the Office of Preventive Health to provide leadership in promoting healthful food choices at company meetings and worksite functions. Employees have an opportunity to make healthy food choices at work that benefit their health. We can model our commitment to good health by making our meetings and events healthier, and sharing this vision with others across the state.*



## General Guidelines

- Emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, low-fat dairy and lean protein sources
- Offer low-fat and low-calorie foods
- Serve smaller portions of higher calorie foods (e.g. mini, halved or quartered bagels, muffins or cookies)
- Include a vegetarian option with meals and snacks
- Offer seasonal and local foods when possible
- Use lower fat versions of condiments (e.g. dressings, mayonnaise, cream cheese, sour cream and dips)
- For mid-morning and mid-afternoon meetings, consider serving only low calorie or no calorie beverages
- Serve only 100 percent no calorie or low calorie juice, and use glasses or containers that are 12 ounce or smaller
- Serve fat-free or low-fat milk with coffee and tea
- Offer water with meals and snacks

*If registration forms are used, provide space to indicate food allergies or dietary restriction*



## Breakfast Meetings

- Fresh fruit
- Flavored yogurt (fat-free or low-fat)
- Fruit bread (5 gram fat or less/1 oz. slice)  
Skip serving the butter or margarine
- Bagels 3<sup>1/2</sup>" diameter or less; serve with low-fat cream cheese, or other low-fat spreads, jam or jelly
- Muffins, small or mini (5g fat or less per muffin)
- Granola bars (5 gram fat or less per bar)
- Beverages from "Beverages" list on page six
- Unsweetened/high fiber cereal
- Whole grain waffles and French toast with pureed fruit
- Lean ham or Canadian bacon, vegetarian sausage or bacon substitute
- Oatmeal with fruit and nut toppings



## Catered Lunches and Dinners

- Select an entree with no more than 12 to 15 grams of fat
- Always offer a vegetarian entree
- Avoid fried foods and cream sauces; ask the caterer to use fat-free or low-fat preparation methods
- Select items that are broiled, baked, grilled or steamed
- Include fresh fruit
- Include at least one non-starchy vegetable — fresh or cooked, with no butter or cream sauces added
- Serve salads with dressing on the side and offer at least one fat-free or low-fat dressing
- Serve whole grain breads — skip the butter or margarine
- Choose low fat/lower calorie desserts:
  - sliced fresh fruit and offer with fat-free or low-fat yogurt dip
  - fat-free or low-fat ice cream
  - frozen yogurt or sherbet
  - sorbet



## Catered Receptions

- Fresh sliced fruit with fat-free or low-fat yogurt dip
- Sliced raw vegetables with fat-free or low-fat dressing, salsa or tofu dip
- Raw vegetable salads marinated in fat-free or low-fat Italian dressing
- Pasta, tofu, and vegetable salads with fat-free or low-fat dressing
- Cheese cut into 3/4” squares or smaller
- Whole grain crackers – 5 grams fat or less per serving
- Fish – baked, broiled, seared, or grilled
- Lean beef or turkey –1 ounce slices
- Cake – sliced into small two-inch squares
- Angel food cake slices with fruit topping
- Chocolate fountain with fresh fruit and marshmallows
- Beverages from “Beverages” list on page 6



## Boxed Lunch Sandwich Ideas

- Whole grain bread or wrap
- Meats, poultry or marinated low-fat tofu (3 grams fat per ounce.)
- Cheese, 1 ounce
- Fresh fruit
- Raw vegetable cup or side salad
- Pretzels or baked chips (7 grams of fat or less) or small portion dessert
- Choose a selection of beverages from the “Beverages” list on page 6
- Topping of lettuce, tomatoes, onions, pickles, cucumbers, peppers
- On the side
  - Mustard
  - Low-fat mayonnaise
  - Ketchup

# Beverages

*Serve beverages with little or no added sugar such as:*

- Ice water
- Water or calorie-free flavored sparkling water
- 100 percent fruit juice or vegetable juice (12 ounces or less)
- Fat-free or low-fat milk
- Hot or cold regular tea or herbal tea
- Coffee and flavored coffees, regular and decaffeinated
- Coffee/tea creamers or fat-free or low-fat milk or fat-free half and half
- Diet soft drinks

# Snacks

*Serve delicious fruits and vegetables to keep attendees alert and productive!*

- Consider not having food at mid-morning or mid-afternoon meetings
- Consider offering only no calorie or low calorie beverages. See “Beverages” list above
- Fresh fruit – sliced and offered with fat-free or low-fat yogurt dip
- Raw vegetables – sliced and offered with fat-free or low-fat dressing or salsa dip
- Fruit smoothies or fat-free or low-fat frozen yogurt based milk shakes
- Baked tortilla chips with bean dip and salsa
- Pretzels with sweet mustard
- Popcorn (5 grams fat or less per serving) with trail mix
- Whole grain crackers (5 grams fat or less per serving)
- Granola fiber bars (5 grams fat or less per serving)

# Sample Meals

## Breakfast

- Low-fat breakfast burrito bar
- Low-fat, whole wheat or corn tortilla
- Egg substitute with sauteed onions, peppers, fresh tomatoes and salsa
- Fresh fruit tray
- Bottled water
- 100 percent fruit juice
- Fat-free or low-fat milk, soy beverages
- Coffee, unsweetened tea, non-fat creamer

## Lunch

- Grilled chicken sandwich on whole-grain bread
- Lettuce and tomato, mustard and low-fat mayonnaise on the side
- Sliced seasonal fruit
- Pretzels or baked potato chips
- Low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt
- Fat-free or low-fat milk, bottled water or tea



## Healthy Break

- Assorted whole fruit and fruit skewers
- Trail mix, granola bars
- Fat-free or low-fat yogurt
- Assorted fruit juice (100 percent) vegetable juices, and bottled water
- Coffee and tea (regular and decaf), hot chocolate (made with fat-free milk), and non-fat creamer

## Dinner

- Mixed green salad with cherry tomatoes and low-fat dressing on the side
- Lemon baked fish
- Brown rice
- Steamed green beans
- Whole-grain rolls, margarine
- Angel food cake with fresh strawberries and light whipped topping
- Fat-free or low-fat milk, soy beverage, coffee (regular and decaf), tea (regular and herbal), hot chocolate (made with fat-free milk), non-fat creamer, and bottled water



## Healthy Alternatives to Traditional Foods

### Instead of:

Soda

Fruit flavored drink

Regular bagels

Regular muffins,  
doughnuts, sweet  
pastries, or croissants

### Try:

Water

100 percent fruit  
or vegetable juice

Small or “mini” whole  
grain bagels

Small low-fat, whole  
grain muffin

## Healthy Alternatives to Traditional Foods (Continued)

### Instead of:

### Try:

Butter	Light margarine or olive oil
Regular cream cheese	Low-fat cream cheese
Regular crackers	Whole grain crackers
Regular chips	Baked or low-fat chips and pretzels
Regular cheese	Low-fat cheese
Mayonnaise or sour cream based dips	Salsa, low-fat cottage cheese, or low-fat salad dressing dips
Salads with dressing	Salads with dressing on the side
Regular dressing	Fat-free or low-fat dressings or vinaigrettes
Mayonnaise-based pasta salads	Pasta salad made with fat-free or low-fat dressings or oil and vinegar
Sandwiches on white bread or croissants	Sandwiches on whole grain breads or wraps
White rice	Brown rice
High-fat cold cuts and fried meats	Lean deli meats, skinless poultry or fish
Cooked vegetables in cream sauces or oil	Steamed vegetables
Chips or cookies	Fruit and vegetable trays
Fruit pies or tarts	Fresh fruit

# Energize Your Meetings!

*Meeting breaks are great opportunities for employees to take part in physical activity. You don't have to be a fitness expert to lead a physical activity break. Just make sure to **Have Fun and Be Safe!***

## Physical Activity Suggestions

- Schedule 15 minute breaks in the morning and afternoon.
- Schedule brief 5 – 10 minute physical activity breaks led by a group member for the first half of the break.  
Activity should feel safe and fun for all group members.
- Leave time at lunch for physical activity
- Include physical activity on the agenda so participants can plan appropriately.
- Use ice breakers that involve physical activity.
- To encourage physical activity throughout the meeting, tell participants that the dress code is casual.
- If there are stairs, encourage participants to take them.
  - Place signs near the elevators telling people where the stairs are
  - Point out location of stairs at beginning of meetings and at breaks.
- Choose a meeting location where participants can easily and safely take a walk.
- Provide participants with maps of the area showing good walking routes.
- If the event is in a hotel, give hours and location of gym or nearby recreational facility.
- Organize an early morning physical activity opportunity at overnight events.
- Give participants incentives for being active.
- Encourage “walk and talk” sessions instead of traditional roundtables.

# Physical Activity at Meetings

*By incorporating physical breaks into meetings, employees can work towards achieving the recommended amount of daily physical activity. Including physical activity breaks into long meetings improves employee health as well as productivity.*

## A Physical Activity Break Is:

- Completely voluntary
- Movement at one's own pace that is comfortable and does not cause pain.
- Three to ten minutes long, gets the muscles warm and the heart pumping.
- A reason to smile.
- An energizer for the rest of the meeting.

## A Physical Activity Break Does Not Need to:

- Make people sweat.
- Cause pain or discomfort.
- Be professionally organized or led.

## Guidelines for Physical Activity Breaks:

- For two-hour meetings, include a stretch break.
- For two to four-hour meetings, include a five to ten minute activity break, schedule time for a 30 minute break and encourage participants to take a walk or engage in another physical activity.
- For all-day meetings, in addition to stretch breaks and five minute activity breaks, schedule time for a 30 minute break and encourage participants to take a walk or engage in another physical activity.



## Physical Activity at Meetings

### Simple Tips on How to Lead a Physical Activity Break:

- Physical activity breaks can take place anywhere (e.g., inside the meeting room, outside the room, outside the building, or even in your chair).
- Ensure sufficient space and clearance for everyone to avoid injury.
- Advise participants to do only what feels good and to stop immediately if anything hurts.

### Physical Activity Suggestions that Are Ideal for Meeting Breaks:

- Slowly stretch neck, shoulders, arms, hands, back, legs and feet – avoid bouncing and jerky movements.
- Move arms, head, and torso in circles.
- Lead a brisk walk around the room, the inside of the building, or outside. Consider including the stairs, if available.
- March in place.
- Suggest that participants lift knees higher or pump their arms if they want to get a more vigorous work out, but only if it is comfortable.

# Ideas for Fun Physical Activity at Meetings

## Writing Your Name

Raise your right hand. Pretend you have a pencil in your hand. Print your first name. Using your left foot, write your name in cursive. Pretend you have a pencil sticking out of your belly button. Print or cursive, write your first name. No abbreviations! Don't forget to cross the "t's" and dot the "i's".

Every activity, even one as simple as writing your name or conducting a meeting, can be made fun.

## Lead With Your Body

Walk around the room while leading with a particular body part of your choosing. It could be a foot, shoulder, knee, hip, ear, whatever! Lead as if that part would hit the wall first if you walked into it. Freeze! Lead with a new body part. Freeze! Now come up with a unique sound to go along with your new walk.

## Beach Volleyball

Pass out several invisible beach balls. Pass (carefully hit) them around the room. Play along. You may want to make a show of bringing the invisible balls into the room. "Hand" them out to folks to get them started. You can also use real balls and name them with the "issues" you are addressing. You have to keep all of the "issues" up at the same time. Invisible balls get more people active because people wait for the real one to come to them rather than pretend it's already there.

# Ideas for Fun Physical Activity at Meetings (Continued)

## Mr. Ed's School Counting

Each handclap counts as one. Each foot stomp or knee slap counts as ten. Can you count to four? Can you count to 32? What is five times seven? What is 144 divided by 12? Great job! Give yourself four!

## Story Time

Make up or find a short story (three to six paragraphs) with lots of action words. As you read it out loud, the participants can act out every action.

## Resources

American Cancer Society Meeting Well Tool  
[www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

Resource Guide to Healthy Meeting and Events  
[www.wellness.ucr.edu](http://www.wellness.ucr.edu)

Healthy Meeting Guide  
[www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com](http://www.eatsmartmovemorenc.com)

California 5 a Day – Be active! Worksite Program  
[www.csph.ca.gov](http://www.csph.ca.gov)

United State Department of Agriculture  
[www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov)

American Dietetic Association  
[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

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