



FACTOID 2: VARIETY & CHOICES

Healthy Meetings Checklist Items: *Are there enough variety and choices over the course of the day?*

Have smaller portions of foods that are high in sugar, salt or fat and larger portions of foods that are lower in fat and calories. Is water offered as a beverage? Instead of having food at midmorning or mid-afternoon meetings, presentations and seminars, offer only beverages or take a physical activity break instead.

It takes a **variety** of foods to get the energy, protein, vitamins, minerals, and fiber we need. Variety and choices are keys to meeting diverse needs. Smaller portions of foods that are high in sugar, salt, or fat (or “mini-versions”) and larger portions of fruits and vegetables add to our choices and options. As a choice for all meals, snacks and breaks, offer water: plain, cool and clear or with a hint of mint or fruit. When catering, discuss the choices, options and possibilities with the caterer.

Choices

Offer three to four “choices” and opportunities for healthful options.

Example: Apples, bananas, carrots and bagel rounds (sliced into circles) with Piña Colada sauce or Thousand Island dressing.



Piña Colada Sauce/Dip

1 carton (6-8 ounces) low-fat or non-fat vanilla yogurt

1 carton (6 ounces) frozen pineapple juice concentrate

Coconut extract flavoring to taste

Combine ingredients and mix well. Chill and serve with fruit, vegetables or whole grain breads, crackers or baked chips.

Thousand Island Dressing/Dip

8 ounces low-fat or non-fat vanilla yogurt

1/4 cup tomato catsup

1/4 cup pickle relish

1/4 teaspoon pepper

Combine ingredients and mix well. Chill and serve with fruit, vegetables or whole grain breads, crackers or baked chips. Makes approximately 1 cup of dressing.

Mini-versions

Mini-muffins are approximately one-fourth to one-third the size of regular muffins and one-sixth to one-fifth the size of larger ones, and just as tasty and satisfying.

Smaller dishes and serving utensils

Smaller snack plates, divided plates, and smaller serving spoons can help us as portion controllers. (We'll take less and eat less.)

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Water

Water is the priority nutrient. Drink it bottled and cooled, with lemon and mint, or with a hint of fruit juice. Offer water with all meals, snacks and breaks.

Lemony Iced Water

1 lemon or lime to 3 quarts water (or to taste)
Enough ice to make 4 quarts (a gallon)
Optional: mint leaves

Slice lemon/lime into rounds. Fill a gallon pitcher, punch bowl or beverage cooler with water and ice. Gently squeeze lemon/lime slices into water, and stir well. Optional: Gently “bruise” several mint leaves and add to water; or add sprigs as a garnish.

Hint of Fruit Waters

To a gallon (four quarts) of water and ice, add a cup of frozen juice concentrate.

Location

The location of “foods” (refreshments) may be a factor in the amounts we consume. Have water at participants’ tables, but have food items at a separate table.

Consider not offering food at midmorning or mid-afternoon meetings, presentations and seminars

We are surrounded by food and live in an environment saturated with food. With the increasing rates of overweight and obesity, ask yourself if it is necessary to always provide food. A physical activity break with water as the only beverage goes a long way to increase energy levels during meetings and seminars. Create a NEW “norm”: food does not have to be central to everything.

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