

Healthy Meetings and Events



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- A healthy lifestyle is a result of many choices during the day, both at home and at work. Long days, hectic schedules, meetings, and more meals eaten away from home all have an impact on your energy level and long term health. Small changes can make BIG differences in improving and maintaining your health.
- Meet Smart: Putting Health on the Agenda offers practical ideas on how to make the healthy choice the easy choice at your next meeting, event or gathering. Suggestions will include:
 - ▶ offering healthy foods and beverages
 - ▶ encouraging eating fresh and local whenever possible
 - ▶ seeking ways to include physical activity
 - ▶ choosing greener options whenever possible
 - ▶ choosing tobacco-free facilities, and
 - ▶ ensuring food safety

Meeting Smart: Putting Health on the Agenda

- Suggestions for putting health on the agenda:
 - ▶ Offering Healthy Foods and Beverages
 - Beverages
 - Breakfast Meetings
 - Snacks
 - Sandwiches
 - Hot Meals
 - ▶ Eat Fresh, Eat Local!
 - ▶ Ways to Include Physical Activity
 - ▶ Choosing Greener Options
 - ▶ Ensuring Food Safety
 - ▶ Choosing Tobacco-Free Facilities



Offer Healthy Foods and Beverages

- Boost energy and help fight fatigue! A healthy diet contributes to overall health and vitality. Ensure that food and beverages consumed at work are healthy, flavourful foods that your entire group will enjoy.
- Choose foods based on *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide* (www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide). Aim for at least 3 food groups for meals and 2 food groups for snacks:
 - ▶ Vegetables and Fruit
 - ▶ Grain Products
 - ▶ Milk and Alternatives
 - ▶ Meat and Alternatives
- Serve vegetables and fruit more often. Examples include raw vegetables cut up and offered with or without a lower fat dressing, fruit, whole or cut up, either fresh, frozen, canned, or dried, and 100% vegetable or fruit juices.

Healthy choices, continued

- Offer lower fat milk and alternatives. Examples include skim, 1% or 2% milk; fortified soy beverages, lower fat cheeses (20% milk fat or less) and lower fat yogurt (2% milk fat or less).
- Offer a variety of whole grain products. Examples include whole wheat, rye, cracked wheat, multi-grain breads and cereals.
- Serve smaller portion sizes. Examples include mini muffins or mini bagels, smaller entrée sizes, and smaller amounts of fillings in sandwiches.
- Ensure that your menu includes choices for those with special dietary needs and food allergies.
- Order locally produced healthy foods and beverages, when possible.



Beverage Suggestions

- Water — request tap water in jugs to be more environmentally friendly
- 100% vegetable or fruit juices
- Skim, 1%, or 2%, white or chocolate milk
- Fortified soy beverages
- Coffee and tea served with skim, 1%, or 2% milk



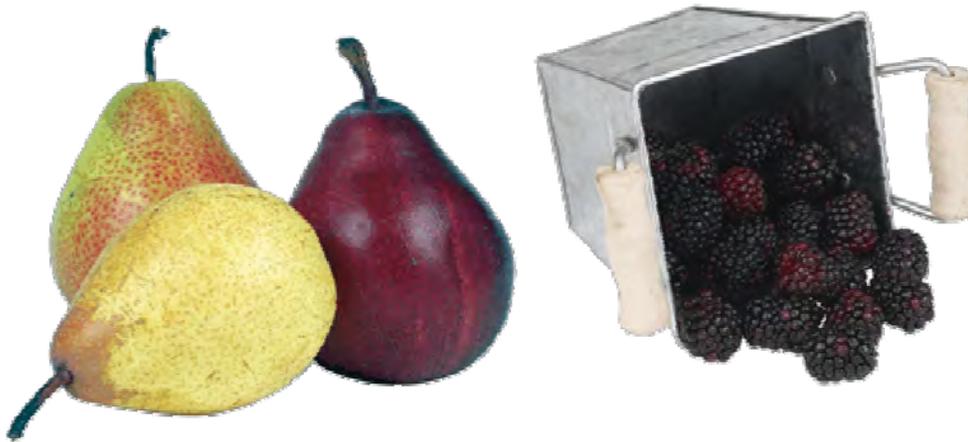
Breakfast Suggestions

- Fruit — whole or cut up; fresh, frozen, canned or dried
- Yogurt (2% milk fat or less)
- Hot or cold whole grain cereals with skim, 1% or 2% milk
- Bagels 3 1/2 " diameter or less — a variety of whole grain options
- Protein source — nut butters, such as peanut or almond, or hard-boiled eggs
- Muffins small, mini, or cut in half — a variety of lower fat, whole grain, and fruit options



Snack Suggestions

- Fruit — whole or cut up; fresh, frozen, canned or dried
- Raw vegetables — cut up and offered with or without lower fat dressing or dip
- Yogurt — 2% milk fat or less
- Lower fat cheeses (20% milk fat or less) — ask for $\frac{3}{4}$ inch cubes
- Lower fat whole grain crackers
- Baked desserts — specify small portions, such as two-bite size. Ask for fibre rich choices.



Sandwich Suggestions

- Choose whole grain breads, pitas, wraps, or buns.
- Choose only lean meats — roasted versions of beef, chicken, turkey, or ham.
- Always include vegetarian options.
- Include a selection of lower fat cheese — 20% milk fat or less.
- Ask for sandwiches with little or no mayo, butter, or margarine or ask for these to be served on the side. Also ask for some lower fat options on the side such as mustard, chutney, hummus, or relish.
- Offer toppings of shredded lettuce, mixed greens, chopped tomatoes, or sliced peppers.



Hot Meal Suggestions

- Choose leaner meats, fish, and poultry that are grilled, broiled, roasted, or steamed instead of fried. Offer meat portions that are consistent with Canada's Food Guide recommendations — 2 ½ oz or 75g portions.
- Serve cooked vegetables with entrees.
- Offer pasta dishes with low-fat toppings like tomato sauce rather than butter, cream, or cheese sauces.
- Offer broth-based soups instead of cream-based soups.
- Offer vegetarian options.

Eat Fresh, Eat Local

- Serve locally grown and produced foods often — they are fresher and less expensive when in season. You also support local farmers and producers and reduce shipping costs and environmental impact.
- Ask caterers what local healthy foods they can supply.
- Choose foods in season, such as berries in the summer and apples in the fall. These are more likely to be local foods.



Seek Ways to Include Physical Activity

- Physical activity helps reduce stress and fatigue and promotes greater ease and comfort.
- Encourage people to walk, wheel, or cycle to and from the meeting, if distances allow.
- Include a stretch break or walk on the agenda, perhaps replacing a coffee break with an activity break. Let people know beforehand so they can bring a jacket or comfortable shoes.
- Meet or have a networking break while you walk.
- Include stretch breaks on the agenda — even five minutes can re-vitalize participants.
- Respect participants' comfort levels. Let them know that the activity is optional and encourage them to go at their own pace. Specify the length of time for the break so you can get back to the agenda.
- Ensure that the environment is safe for the activity.



Choose Greener Options Whenever Possible

- Help care for our environment by reducing unnecessary packaging and waste. Reduce, re-use, and recycle whenever you can:
 - ▶ Use regular dishes and utensils if facilities are available for proper washing and storage or choose disposable dishes that can be composted.
 - ▶ Serve water and other beverages in pitchers rather than individual bottles or cartons.
 - ▶ Choose nametags that can be returned and re-used.
 - ▶ Recycle. Provide blue boxes to collect glass, cans, and paper.
 - ▶ Walk, wheel, or cycle to the meeting if it's close-by. Encourage carpooling if the meeting's at a distance.
 - ▶ Use e-mail and file sharing to distribute agendas, minutes, and reports, to save paper. If you do have to print files, choose two-sided printing when possible.

Choose Tobacco-free Facilities

- Host meetings at smoke-free properties, inside and out, to protect participants from exposure to second-hand smoke.
- Ensure that all venues and events are tobacco-free — meeting spaces, social events, outdoor events, accommodations, and transportation, if provided.
- Be aware that all government and public buildings are smoke-free in Atlantic Canada. If you are arranging a meeting with participants from outside the region, share this information on your website or in your literature.

Ensure Food Safety

- Tips to keep meetings foods safe:
 - ▶ Keep foods at recommended temperatures. Keep hot foods hot (60° C or higher) and cold foods cold (4° C or lower).
 - ▶ Minimize the time between food delivery and food service.
 - ▶ Wash hands before handling food.
 - ▶ Ensure food is prepared in a licensed facility.
 - ▶ Discard food that has been left at room temperature for more than two hours.
 - ▶ Call your local environmental health office if you have questions or concerns.
 - ▶ Ask participants about food allergies and special diets when planning your event. Many caterers will easily accommodate such diets if asked in advance.

More Information

- For more information about the Healthy Meeting and Events Policy, please contact the PEI Department of Health, Primary Care Division, Health Promotion / Chronic Disease Prevention Unit, (902) 368-6171.
- These additional resources may help you plan your next meeting or event:
 - ▶ Meeting Planner's Checklist
 - ▶ Administrative Assistant's Checklist