



# Healthy Meeting Guide

The Ohio State University is committed to helping faculty and staff thrive at work and at home. Please use this healthy meeting guide as a tool to host healthier meetings. Meeting leaders can have a great impact on the health of their employees by making a few small changes to a department meeting or event to incorporate tactics to address health topics such as enhancing the physical environment, active living, hydration and healthy eating.

## Physical environment

Individuals are more likely to consume healthier options when they are made readily available<sup>1</sup>. Make your meeting as healthy and productive as possible by considering the following:

- Make water visible, announce its location and availability<sup>2,3</sup>
- Place healthier options where they are easily visible<sup>2,3</sup>
- Describe the healthy options provided<sup>2,3</sup>
- Select a space that provides optimal lighting, not too dim or too bright
- Begin the meeting with a few seconds of meditation or deep breathing to focus the group

## Active living

Physical activity can reduce the risk of heart disease and stroke by 20%<sup>4</sup>. Movement during a meeting can both help increase energy levels and encourage physical activity during the workday. Encourage voluntary participation of members and remind them to complete the exercise in a manner that is most comfortable for them. Tips on how to incorporate movement into your meeting include:

- Hold a walking meeting when possible (notify attendees ahead of time)<sup>5,6</sup>
- Set a timer to pause for 30 seconds every 20 minutes to perform a physical movement such as arm raises, walking around the table and/or stretching
- Announce at the start of the meeting that standing is encouraged
- Offer standing or walking meetings

## Hydration

Did you know the brain is comprised of 75% water?<sup>7</sup> Dehydration is linked to a foggy mind, mood swings, constipation and more serious health concerns such as ulcers and kidney stones<sup>8,9</sup>. Combat these by encouraging meeting attendees to stay hydrated during the meeting<sup>10</sup>.

- Provide pitchers of water and cups or water bottles
- Offer waters infused with fruits, vegetables and herbs
- Consider providing other forms of hydration including low caloric beverages, fruits and vegetables or 100% fruit or vegetable juices<sup>2,3,11</sup>
- Offer unsweetened beverages like water, coffee or tea instead of soda and beverages with added sugar
- Limit caffeine and limit sugar intake<sup>12</sup>

## Healthy eating

A healthy diet plays an important role in maintaining a healthy lifestyle and preventing the effects of lifestyle-related chronic diseases. Small portioned, healthy snacks during meetings help cultivate healthy eating habits which can extend further than the meeting! Adults who consume at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day can reduce their risk of stroke and heart disease by 30%<sup>13</sup>. Fuel meetings with health and wellness in mind with the following tips<sup>2,3,11</sup>:

- Include whole grains when serving options such as sandwiches, pastas and breakfast items<sup>2,3,11,14</sup>
- Provide a colorful variety of fresh fruits and vegetables<sup>2,11,14</sup>
- Limit sweet treats to reduce sugar intake<sup>3,11,14</sup>
- Offer snacks low in calories and high in nutrients (i.e. raw nuts and seeds with low or no added salt or sugar, baked chips or pita chips with healthy dips (salsas, guacamole, bean dips, hummus)<sup>2,11</sup>

For more in depth information and resources on each of these topics please visit [yp4h.osu.edu](http://yp4h.osu.edu). For the complete list of references please visit [go.osu.edu/healthymeetingreferences](http://go.osu.edu/healthymeetingreferences).

# Healthy Meeting Checklist

Meeting/Event Name	Date	Time	Location
<b>Notes</b>			

Am I offering at least one healthy option in this meeting? *Check below all that apply.*

## **I am providing a physical environment for a healthy and productive meeting:**

- Water in a visible, easy to reach and attractive location
- Healthier food options in an easily visible location
- Designation of the healthy options
- Meeting space that provides optimal lighting, not too dim or too bright
- A few seconds of meditation or deep breathing at the beginning of the meeting to focus the group
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **I am providing an active living option:**

- Walking meeting
- Announcement at the start of the meeting that standing is encouraged
- Breaks for physical activity (arm raises, walking around the table and stretching)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **I am providing a hydration option:**

- Pitchers of water/cups or water bottles
- Water infused with fruits, vegetables and herbs
- Unsweetened coffee or tea
- Other forms of hydration (low caloric beverage, fresh fruit, fresh vegetables, 100 percent fruit and/or vegetable juice)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## **I am providing a healthy eating option:**

- Whole grain option (i.e. sandwiches, pastas and breakfast items)
- Fresh fruit(s)
- Fresh vegetable(s)
- Low in sugar sweet treat
- Low calorie/high in nutrient snack (raw nuts and/or seeds, baked chips, pita chips, salsa, guacamole, bean dip or hummus)
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_