

## How to Get Started Creating a Healthy Work Environment

Andrea Hausel, MPH, RD, CDN

Most of us spend the majority of our waking hours at work. Research shows that our physical and social environments have profound effects on what we eat and how much we weigh.

Consider this shocking statistic from the research of Brian Wansink (Professor at Cornell's Food and Brand Lab): "People who have candy in or on their desk reported weighing 15.4 pounds more than those who didn't."

So, how can we tweak our work environment to help us eat healthier?

Here are some tips to get started creating a worksite that supports healthy eating:

- Keep fresh fruit in your break room
- Consider having seasonal fruit delivered to your office to encourage healthy snacking
- If you order office snacks, look for unprocessed non-perishable foods such as small packages of raw almonds
- Ask the staff who order food for the office to opt for healthier items. This Healthy Meeting Toolkit provides detailed guidance on ways to make healthy meetings part of the office culture: <http://cspinet.org/nutritionpolicy/Healthy-Meeting-Toolkit.pdf>
- For meetings, serve fruit for dessert. For special occasions, cut pieces of dessert, such as cake, in half.
- When possible, order foods that have been baked, broiled, steamed or poached. Avoid fried foods.
- Offer a vegetarian option at meetings
- Serve a vegetable choice at meetings -- salads or non-fried vegetable sides are ideal
- Place a water cooler or filtered water in easily accessible areas.
- Have a large refrigerator available so people can bring lunch from home
- Instead of ordering soda or diet soda for meetings, serve seltzer, iced herbal tea or fruit-infused water
- If you can't eliminate candy jars from the office, put them in drawers, in an inconspicuous location or try using opaque containers.
- Create a list of healthier restaurant options within the delivery area of your practice

\*Need help finding a fruit delivery vendor or healthy restaurants near you? We can help! Email us at [UHAWellness@stanfordhealthcare.org](mailto:UHAWellness@stanfordhealthcare.org)