

Healthy Eating Ideas for Communities

Simple changes to meals and snacks can make an impact on health. You can make it easier for people to choose healthy food options by including them in the menu at community meetings and events. The following guidelines can help meeting/event planners select healthier food and beverages to be served.^{1,2}

- 🍓 Offer healthy food choices for breakfasts, lunches, dinners, and breaks.
- 🍓 Serve foods lower in fat and calories.
- 🍓 Offer smaller food portions.
- 🍓 Serve only healthy beverages at meetings, presentations, and seminars. If food is provided, offer fruits, vegetables, and/or healthy snacks (see *Snacks* below).
- 🍓 Offer tasty, affordable, and healthy foods in vending machines.
- 🍓 Provide suggestions for fruit, vegetable, and whole grain dishes on potluck sign-up sheets.

**Approximately 77%
of Michigan adults
eat less than
5 servings of fruits
and vegetables daily.**
- BRFS, 2002

Ideas for Healthy Meals & Snacks ²	Breakfast	Lunch & Dinner	Snacks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole or sliced fruit ▪ 100% fruit & vegetable juice ▪ Low-fat or fat-free milk & yogurt ▪ Fat-free milk for coffee & tea ▪ Whole wheat breads/bagels ▪ Low-fat or mini muffins ▪ Fruit spreads or low-fat cream cheese ▪ High-fiber cereals (e.g., bran flakes & low-fat granola) ▪ Fruit toppings for hot/cold cereals ▪ Pancakes, waffles & crepes with fruit toppings ▪ Vegetables for omelet fillings or added to scrambled eggs ▪ Limit high-fat meats ▪ Limit fried foods ▪ Half bagels with low-fat cream cheese topped with tomatoes & cucumbers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Whole grain breads ▪ Salad dressings & condiments on the side; offer a low-fat or fat free version ▪ Broth or vegetable-based soups ▪ Whole or sliced fruit ▪ Raw vegetables on salads or sandwiches ▪ Vegetables seasoned with fresh herbs ▪ Pasta with tomato or other vegetable-based sauces ▪ Chicken, turkey, fish or shellfish ▪ Vegetarian alternative to all meals ▪ Steamed, poached, baked and broiled meats ▪ Reduced-fat cheeses in menu items requiring cheese ▪ Avoid fried foods ▪ Fruit-based desserts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Water ▪ 100% fruit & vegetable juices ▪ 1% or skim milk ▪ Fruits (whole or sliced) or vegetables with low-fat dips ▪ Tortilla chips with low-fat bean dip and salsa ▪ Pretzels/hot pretzels with mustard ▪ Fresh fruit kabobs ▪ Baked chips ▪ Reduced-fat cookies & crackers ▪ Fig cookies ▪ Animal crackers ▪ Granola bars/cereal bars ▪ Marshmallow cereal bars ▪ Popcorn ▪ Low-fat string cheese/cheese cubes ▪ Frozen fruit juice bars ▪ Frozen yogurt



Tips for Selecting Healthier Options when Using a Caterer¹

- ✓ Ask the caterer to use lower fat or fat free preparation methods, serve added fats like dressings or condiments on the side and provide you with the number of calories and fat grams in entrées (if available)
- ✓ Select lower fat entrées with no more than 12 to 15 fat grams
- ✓ Select items that are broiled, baked, grilled, or steamed rather than fried or sautéed
- ✓ Choose entrées in tomato-based sauces rather than cream, butter or cheese sauces
- ✓ Include fresh fruit
- ✓ Include at least one vegetable—fresh or cooked, with no butter or cream sauces added
- ✓ Include whole grain breads—skip the butter or margarine
- ✓ Always offer a vegetarian entrée
- ✓ Serve salads with dressing on the side—offer at least one low-fat or fat-free dressing
- ✓ Choose lower fat/lower calorie desserts: cut-up fresh fruit with low-fat fruit yogurt dip, low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt, sherbet or sorbet, angel food cake with fruit topping

Healthy Preparation Methods³

Choose Foods Prepared in the Following Ways:

au jus	roasted
au vin	steamed
baked	stir-fried
broiled	tomato-based
poached	dry rub
red sauce	marinara

Avoid or Limit the Foods Prepared in the Following Ways:

au gratin	creamed
basted	crispy/fried
batter-dipped	hollandaise
breaded	in gravy
buttered	sautéed
cheese sauce	smothered

BENEFITS OF 5 A DAY

Diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. Fruits and vegetables provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber, and other substances that are important for good health. Most fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories and are filling. 5 A Day sets good eating examples for children.

5 A Day Tips:

- Remember “5 A Day”: Aim for *at least* 2 servings of fruits and 3 servings of vegetables every day.
- Eating 5 to 9 A Day is quick and easy. A serving is a medium-size piece of fruit; $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (6 fl. oz.) of 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked or canned vegetables or fruit, 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup cooked dry peas or beans, or $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dried fruit.
- You can get your 5 to 9 A Day in many ways because fruits and vegetables come fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and as 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice.⁴

Contact Us: Several State of Michigan departments are collaborating to help communities design themselves to increase the consumption of fruits & vegetables. For more information, contact: Diane Golzynski, Cardiovascular Health, Nutrition & Physical Activity Section, Michigan Department of Community Health, 517/335-8980.

¹ University of Minnesota School of Public Health. *Guidelines for Offering Healthy Foods at Meetings, Seminars, and Catered Events* [On-line]. Available: www.ahc.umn.edu/ahc_content/colleges/sph/sph_news/Nutrition.pdf.

² American Cancer Society. *Meeting Well a Tool for Planning Healthy Meetings and Events*, 2001.

³ Michigan Department of Community Health, Michigan Public Health Institute. *Make Health Your Choice*.

⁴ National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. 5 A Day Tips [On-line]. Available: <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/5aday/tips/basics.htm>.