



## Eating at the Office

For many, eating healthy at the office is a paradox. Oftentimes, the office is a hubbub of activity with little free time available to those who work there. Moreover, some work environments are constantly brimming with sweets, whether from clients, coworkers or even the vending machine. In addition, when a free half hour for lunch actually appears on the horizon, many times, the closest take-out or delivery is fast food or full of high-fat foods. It almost seems as though the office is out to sabotage your meal plan. Just because you are away from home, however, does not mean that healthy eating has to get lost in those stacks on your desk.

- 1. **Prepare in Advance.** Though you may feel there is not enough time in the day, remember that making your lunch will only take 5-10 minutes, and it will actually save you money. Try making a turkey sandwich on whole wheat or rye bread for lunch. Pack a big salad with some grilled chicken and a small roll. Or take leftovers from your healthy homemade dinner.
- 2. **Healthy Snacks.** Most people get that 3 o'clock slump because we are not meant to go 7 hours without eating. Though snacks usually have a bad connotation implying cakes, cookies, or the like, snacks can actually be quite healthy and keep you from overeating later on. Acknowledge that nutritious snacks can become part of your repertoire and bring in some healthy options. If your office has a fridge, stock it with low-fat cheese, cottage cheese or yogurt. Fill your desk drawers with dried fruit, nuts, peanut butter, bread and *Nutrition Bars*. Just remember that portion control is still key. Perhaps pack your dried fruit and nuts in single portion bags. This way, when 3 to 4 hours have elapsed since your last meal and you find yourself foraging, you will be able to eat healthily.
- 3. **Avoid the Vending Machines.** If you remember to prepare in advance and bring healthy snacks, this should not be an issue. If, however, you forgot, remember to look for calorically cheaper, more filling items. If there is a dried fruit and nut mix opt for that, or try soy chips if they are available.
- 4. **Drink Water.** Due to some evolutionary glitch, our thirst and hunger mechanisms seem to be slightly confused. Oftentimes, our bodies are not able to express thirst, and so express we hunger as a way to acquire fluids, since foods contain some amount of liquid. As a result, we often take in more calories than we may need. Therefore, remember to get

those 8-10 8oz glasses of water in each day. Keep a bottle of water on your desk and try to drink it throughout the day (refill as necessary). Whenever you feel a desire to eat, try drinking some water first to see if it is really fluid your body is after.

- 5. ***Make a good choice.*** If you find you do need to go out for lunch or order in, examine the menu for a minute and make a healthy choice. Or keep take-out menus at your desk that you have already skimmed through and highlighted for healthy options. Opt for sandwiches with low-fat meats and without dressings or sauces. Avoid the fried foods. If a dish comes with sauce, ask for it on the side.

Making healthy eating choices at the office is possible if you are willing to take a few extra steps. Try adopting any one (or all) of the above tips to keep your day productive and healthy.

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