

# Healthy Eating at Work

## Worksite Wellness Peer Group Meeting



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# Distinguished Government Employee Nutritionally Initiative



# It's More Than the Food

## Eating decisions - how many have you made today?

- ▶ Average person makes over 227 food related decisions daily
- ▶ Decisions are impacted by:
  - ▶ Knowledge
  - ▶ Personal situation
  - ▶ Social environment
  - ▶ Physical environment
  - ▶ How food is presented





# Food at the Workplace

- ▶ People spend 8 hours a day at work: 50% of waking hours
  - ▶ 113 food decision
  - ▶ One meal
  - ▶ Two snacks
- ▶ Employees can have access to many eating opportunities at work:
  - ▶ Cafeteria, vending
  - ▶ Treats in lunchroom, candy/snack dishes in work areas
  - ▶ Food at meetings and events



Which option supports health eating?



# New research: Decision Fatigue

- ▶ The more choices you make throughout the day, the harder each one becomes for your brain
- ▶ Consequences:

- ▶ Reduced willpower

- ▶ Shortcut

decision

No matter how rational and high-minded you try to be, you can't

Since not all of us have staff to make our food choices for us, we rely on our environment to provide access to the foods we eat. Sometimes the choices we have aren't so good for us.



# How much is too much?

100 calories is equal to:

- ▶ 20 minute walk
- ▶ 8 oz. of regular soda
- ▶ 1 small cookie
- ▶ 5 chocolate almonds
- ▶ 1/4 cup

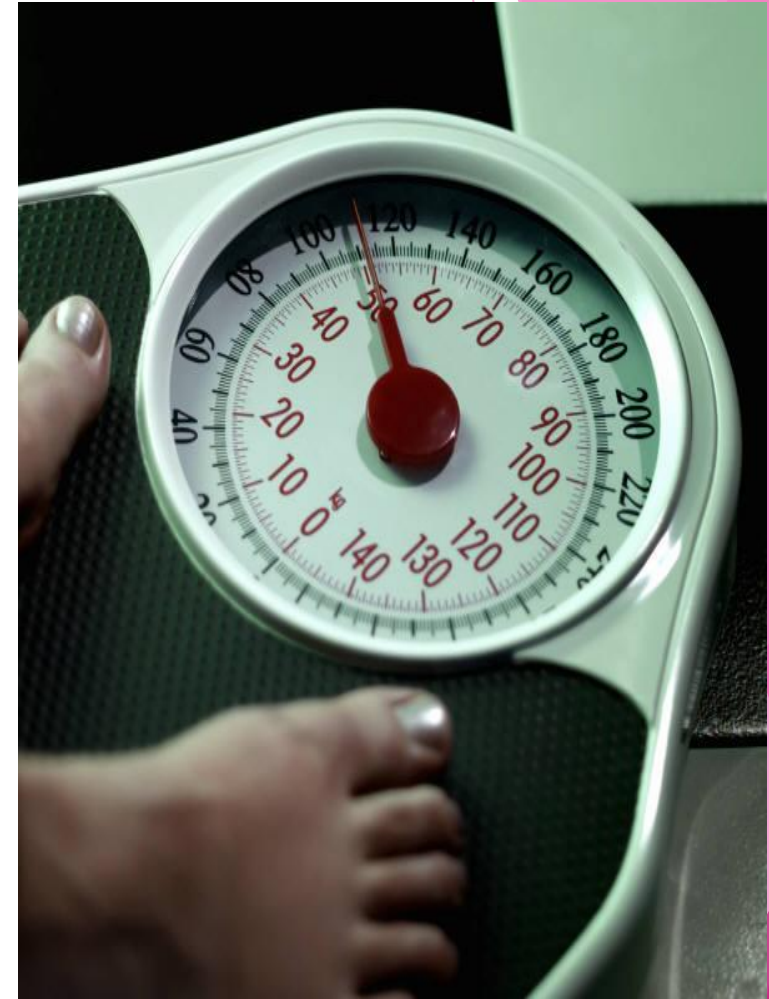
▶ 1

A more typical mid-morning snack is a donut, muffin or bagel - all of which contain closer to 250 or more calories. To burn off a 250 calorie soda, you'd need to walk briskly for 50 minutes. Its much easier for most of us to eat too many calories than it is to burn them up.



# Caloric Environment

- ▶ More than 3800 calories per person produced annually
- ▶ More than 2700 per person available for consumption
- ▶ Average person needs 2000 or fewer calories per day.





# Eating Behavior

- ▶ Not only what, but HOW we eat has as much of an impact on our health

- ▶ Mindless eating - eating until fullness

- ▶ Portion sizes - how much we eat

there are many other cues that affect what and how we eat - like plate size, working or watching TV while eating, etc.

- ▶ "Mindless eating" - Impulsive eating - on the run, while working, etc.





# Business Case for Healthy Foods

- ▶ Can save money on health care costs, absenteeism
- ▶ Can reduce the risk of some chronic diseases
- ▶ Healthy employees are more likely to be at work and productive
- ▶ Improved productivity
- ▶ Retention and attraction

**A healthier work environment lets employees know their employer values them and in turn improves morale and helps to retain and attract key employees.**



# Strategies that work: Pricing

- ▶ Vending study
  - ▶ Reductions of 10%, 25% and 50% on LF snacks increase purchases by 9%, 39% and 93%
- ▶ Cafeteria study
  - ▶ Increased cost of regular soft drinks by 35% decreased purchases by 26%

French SA (2001) *American Journal of Public Health*

Block JP (2010) *American Journal of Public Health*



# Strategies that work: Placement

- ▶ Marketing principals - eye level, clear view

- ▶ Point of Purchase strategies

- ▶ Keep messages simple and

- ▶ When promoting these foods, keep the messages fun and engaging. Most people choose foods because they are familiar, look good, taste good or are convenient. Messages like "It's good for you." simply don't sell product. Convenience, taste, healthy food





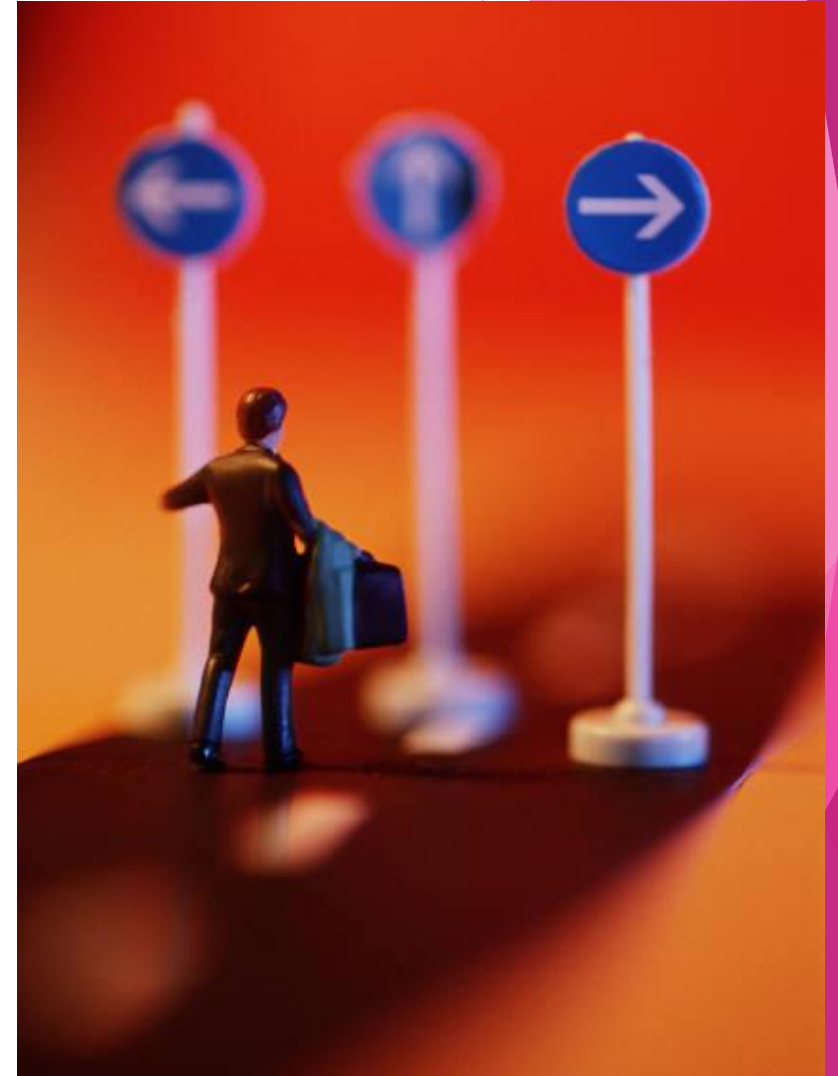
# More Strategies that work

- ▶ Policies that encourage healthy foods at meetings and events
- ▶ Limit treats in common areas, replace with healthy options
- ▶ Encourage people to share healthy foods in their work space and at potlucks
- ▶ Include access to a dietitian as part of your health benefits



# What we've learned

- ▶ Its not easy to change peoples food choices
- ▶ Comprehensive wellness programs get better results
- ▶ Employee involvement is critical
- ▶ Management support is critical
- ▶ Creating a company culture of health is a game changer.



# Healthy Eating at Work: What it Takes

## A Comprehensive Approach:

- ▶ Supportive environment
  - ▶ Access to healthy food
  - ▶ Space to eat
  - ▶ Encourage healthy foods in work environment
- ▶ Social support
  - ▶ Raise awareness
  - ▶ Build skills
- ▶ Policy development
  - ▶ Catering
  - ▶ Vending
  - ▶ Meetings





# Getting It Done

- ▶ Gather key players and get buy-in
- ▶ Conduct a workplace assessment: capture the current environment and eating practices
- ▶ Form a wellness committee
- ▶ Plan and identify areas for improvement
- ▶ Consult with experts, hire consultants, review best practice
- ▶ Put the plan into action: set specific attainable goals
- ▶ Evaluate efforts
- ▶ Involve employees and leadership



# Keeping It Going

- ▶ Solicit employee feedback

- ▶ Polls

- ▶ Surveys

- ▶ Taste testing

- ▶ Focus groups

- ▶ Host healthy eating events

- ▶ Seasonal challenges,

- ▶ Cooking classes,

- ▶ Farm-to-table site

- ▶ a farmers market

It's always helpful to keep things fresh, so offer seasonal activities that support and encourage healthy eating - a few ideas are listed on the slide.



Chronicle / Craig Lee

# Social Support: Raising Awareness

Activities that give employees the information they need to make healthy food choices

► Examples:

- Company newsletter
- Post tips on bulletin boards, pay stubs, etc.
- Events: contests, challenges, brown bag presentations
- Health screenings





# Social Support: Skill Building

Activities that teach employees how to get actively involved in changing eating behaviors

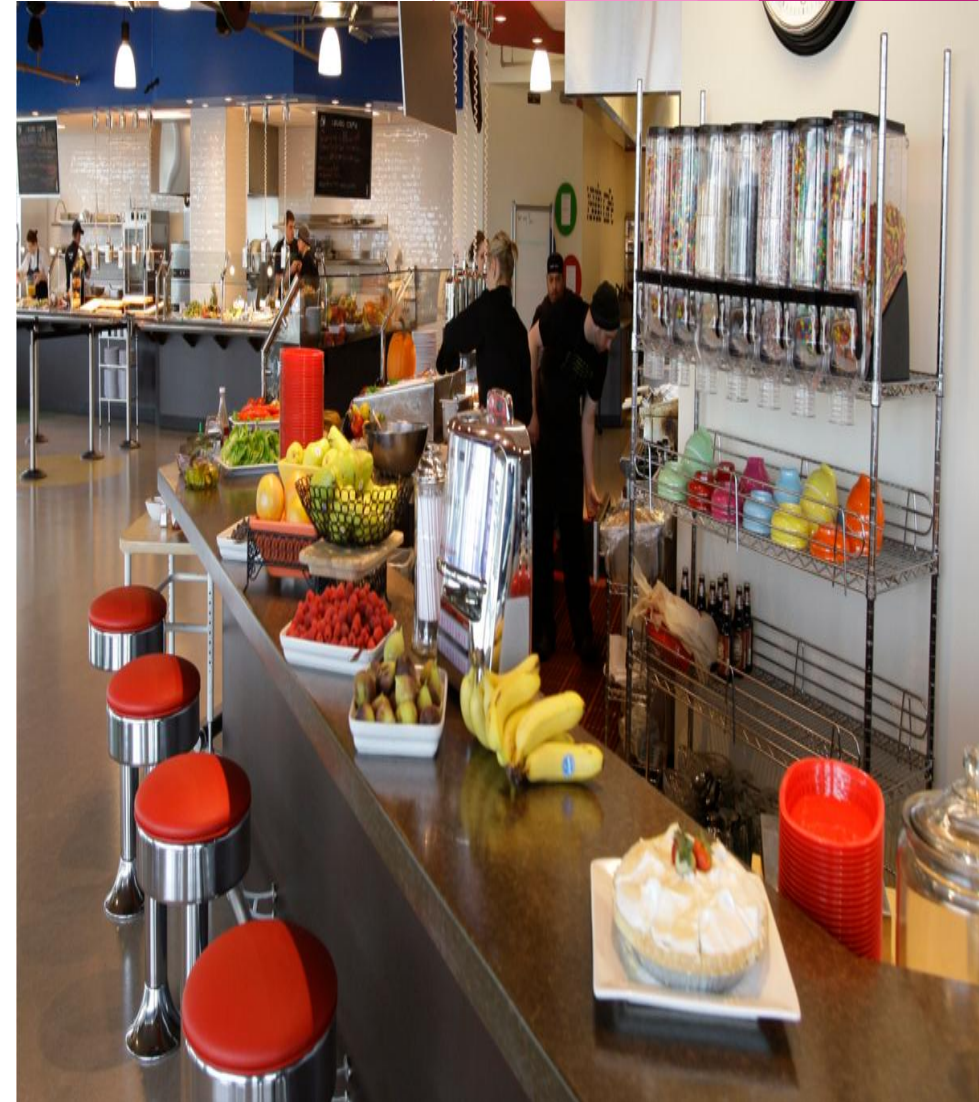
- ▶ Examples:
  - ▶ Sharing recipes
  - ▶ Cooking demonstrations
  - ▶ Label reading educational activities
  - ▶ Weight loss programs
  - ▶ Self-screening questionnaires



# Supportive Environment

The surroundings and conditions which foster healthy eating

- ▶ Examples:
  - ▶ Increase availability of F & V
  - ▶ Make healthy choices convenient and competitively priced
  - ▶ Reduce portion sizes
  - ▶ Modify cafeteria recipes to improve nutritional value



# Human Resources: Behavioral Support

## ► Examples:

- Assure employees have enough resources to do their jobs
- Assure employees have a safe and healthy working environment, including a clean and attractive work area, good eating environment, and safe working conditions
- Assure employees have access to health and safety training from management and other employees
- Assure employees are covered by insurance and other benefits

Human resources play an important role in supporting worksite wellness, especially around employee benefits. Work with them whenever efforts involve benefits and supervisor training.





# Let's Get eNERGIZed

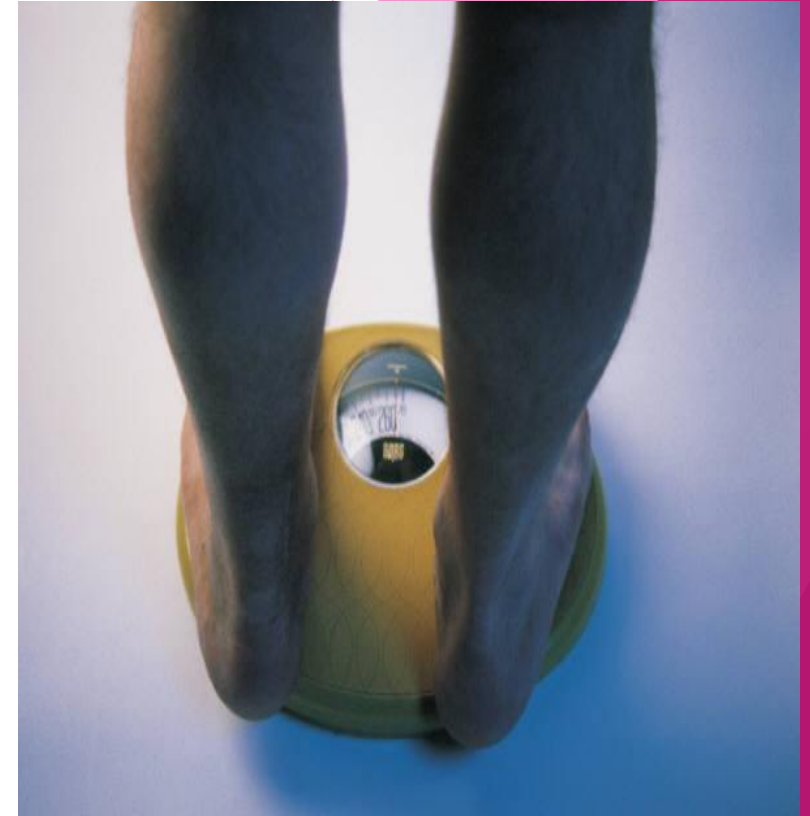


# My Advice



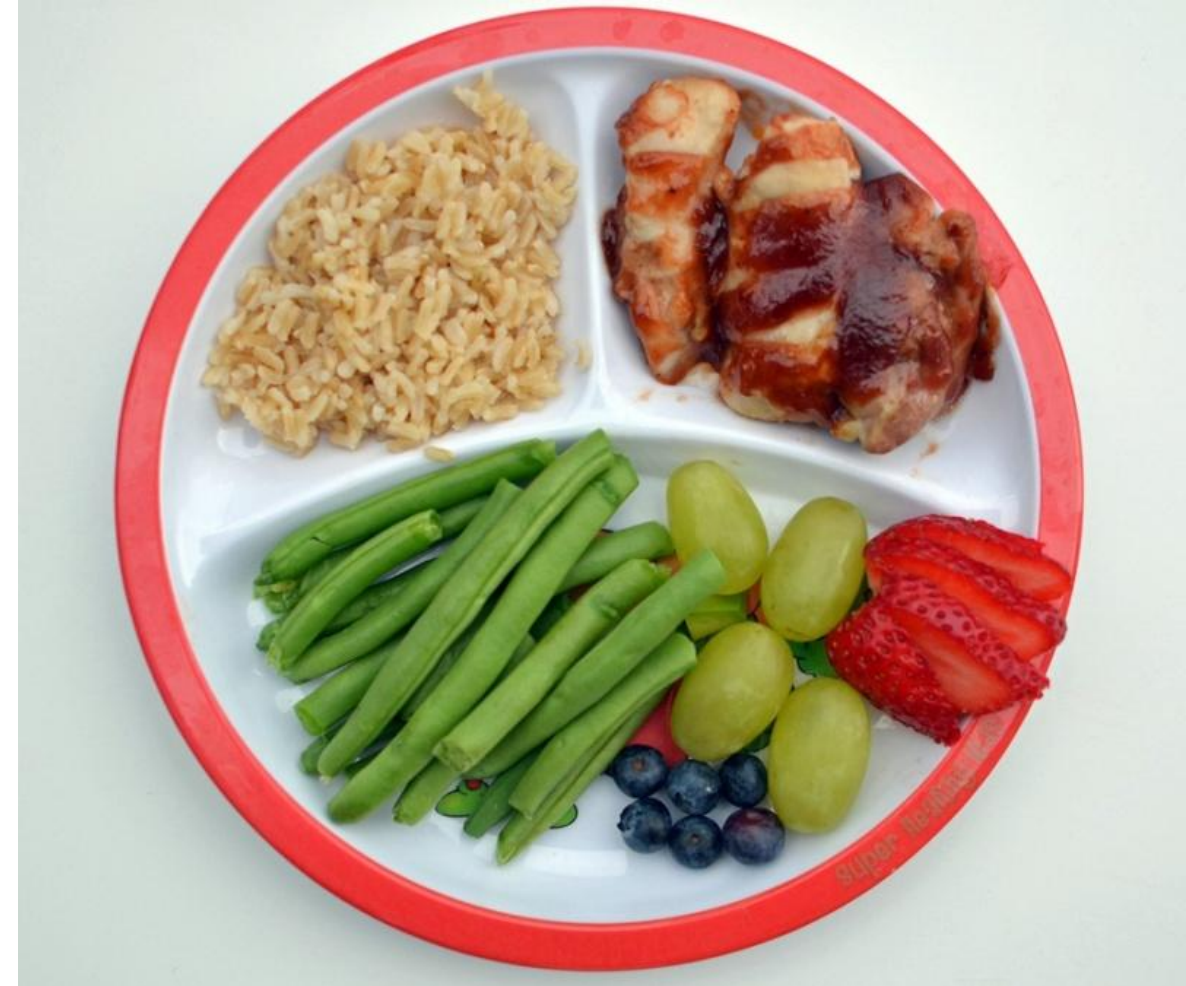
**Stress  
Management**

**Kick the Habit**



**Healthy Eating  
Physical Activity**

# Thank you





# we welcoming you in our conference



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# Resources

- Choose MyPlate at: <http://ChooseMyPlate.gov>
- Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2010 at: [www.cnpp.usda.gov/DGAS2010-PolicyDocument.htm](http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/DGAS2010-PolicyDocument.htm)
- ▶ CDC worksite wellness tools at: <http://www.cdc.gov/sustainability/worksitewellness/index.htm>
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