

American Cancer Society Meeting Well Program Ideas for Healthy Food Options*

People are becoming more and more interested in eating better and being more active. Both heart disease and cancer – the number one and number two causes of death – are largely affected by what we eat and how active we are. In fact, one third of all cancer deaths could be prevented if we ate more fruits, vegetables, and grain foods; ate less fat and drank less alcohol; and became more physically active.



Simple changes to your meals and snacks can provide your meeting participants with power-packed, cancer-fighting nutrients – and give them the energy boost they need to stay alert through the entire day!

General Tips for Meals and Snacks

Breakfast and Brunch

- Serve fruit and 100% fruit juice and vegetable juice
- Offer fat free and light (1%) milk and yogurt
- Offer fat free milk in addition to half 'n half for coffee and tea
- Offer whole wheat breads and cereals when possible
- Offer toast, bagels, fruit breads, and muffins instead of doughnuts, biscuits, and pastries
- Offer fruit spreads in addition to butter and margarine for toast and bagels
- Offer a variety of high-fiber cereals like bran flakes and low-fat granola
- Offer fruit toppings (raisins, dried fruit mix, fresh strawberries, bananas, blueberries, sliced fresh peaches) for hot and cold cereals
- Offer fruit toppings if pancakes, waffles, and crepes are offered
- Offer vegetables like mushrooms, red peppers, onions, tomatoes, green peppers, and spinach for omelet fillings or add to scrambled egg
- Limit high-fat meats like bacon and sausage; opt for Canadian bacon instead
- Limit fried foods like hash browns

Lunch and Dinner

- Offer whole grain breads in addition to white
 - Offer salad dressings on the side, and always include a light version
 - Offer broth or vegetable based soups instead of cream soups
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- Include fruit with every meal
 - Serve at least two vegetables with each meal, and season with fresh herbs instead of butter or cream sauces
 - Add dried fruit like cranberries, raisins, or apricots to rice dishes
 - Serve pastas with tomato or other vegetable based sauces, instead of cream sauces
 - Offer chicken, turkey, fish, and shellfish
- when possible
- Limit red meat (beef, pork and lamb) to 4-ounce servings and offer an alternative
 - Include a vegetarian alternative to all meals
 - Choose steamed, poached, baked, and broiled meats instead of fried or sautéed

- Avoid fried foods like French fries, onion rings, fried chicken
- Request reduced fat cheese be used in all menu items requiring cheese, like vegetable lasagna
- Offer fruit desserts in addition to other desserts

Breaks

- Offer 100% fruit and vegetable juices
- Offer fruits and vegetables with dips
- Offer fruit smoothies or frozen yogurt-based milkshakes
- Offer tortilla chips with bean dip and salsa
- Offer pretzels, hot pretzels with mustard, or popcorn
- Offer cookies or other sweets with fresh fruit kabobs

Stocking a Healthy Vending Machine

Ask your vendor about these options

- Baked chips
- Reduced fat chips, cookies, crackers
- Pretzels
- Chocolate-covered peppermint candy
- "Lite" or "lowfat" candy bars
- Fruit chews and hard candies
- Fig bars and animal crackers
- Granola bars, cereal bars
- Marshmallow cereal bars

Meetings at the Office and Potlucks

You just never know what will show up at your next potluck event. If you have the option of suggesting dishes, pick a variety from the list below. This will help ensure having a colorful, flavorful buffet table. Try providing suggestions for fruit, vegetable, and grain dishes on the sign-up sheet. Make sure you leave space for vegetarian dishes. Use the general tips list for more ideas.

Appetizers

- Raw vegetables with low-fat dip
- Pretzels, low-fat tortilla chips, low-fat potato chips, low-fat popcorn
- Reduced fat cheese assortment with low-fat crackers
- Baked tortilla chips with bean dip, salsa
- Hummus and pita bread
- Baked artichoke dip made with low-fat mayonnaise with low-fat crackers
- Roasted red peppers on thinly sliced Italian bread
- Spinach dip made with low-fat mayonnaise and/or sour cream in bread bowl

Salads and Side Dishes



- Mixed green salad with low-fat dressing
- Rolls and dinner bread
- Fruit salad
- Spinach salad with mandarin oranges and toasted almonds
- Red potato salad made with low-fat mayonnaise and/or sour cream
- Tomato salad with artichoke hearts, onions, black olives, mint, and oregano
- Three-bean salad
- Corn salad with red and green peppers
- Pasta salad made with low-fat dressing
- Rice or couscous with dried fruit and/or vegetables
- Bell peppers stuffed with Spanish rice or corkscrew pasta

Main Dishes

- Chili and soup
- Turkey sandwiches
- Vegetable pizza
- Chicken salad made with low-fat mayonnaise and chopped apples or grapes
- Vegetable stuffed pita sandwiches with low-fat dressing
- Taco salad made with chicken using reduced fat cheese, low-fat sour cream
- Casseroles made with reduced-fat cheeses and lots of vegetables
- Vegetarian lasagna made with reduced-fat cheese

Desserts

- Fresh fruit salad
- Fresh fruit with chocolate and/or caramel dipping sauce
- Fruit cobbler
- Fruit pies
- Oatmeal raisin cookies
- Fig bars
- Frozen yogurt, sorbet, or low-fat ice cream
- Brownies made with applesauce instead of oil
- Carrot cake made with applesauce with added pineapple
- Cake garnished with fruit puree

And don't forget, you can always place a bowl of fruit on the center of the table for snacking