

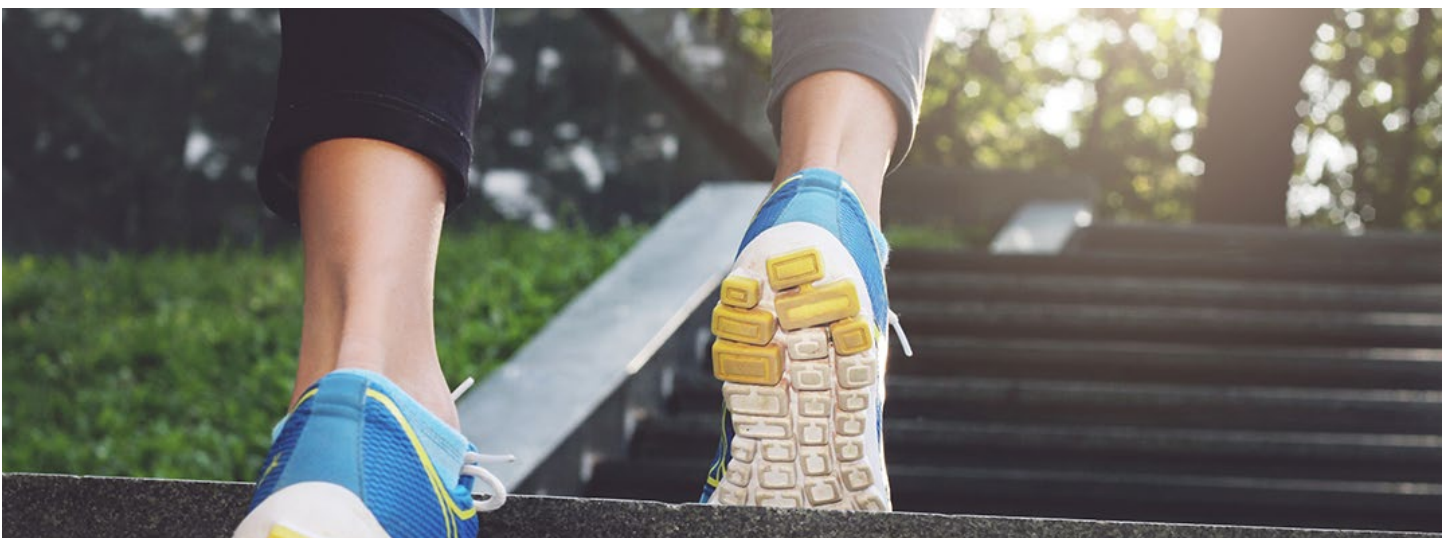


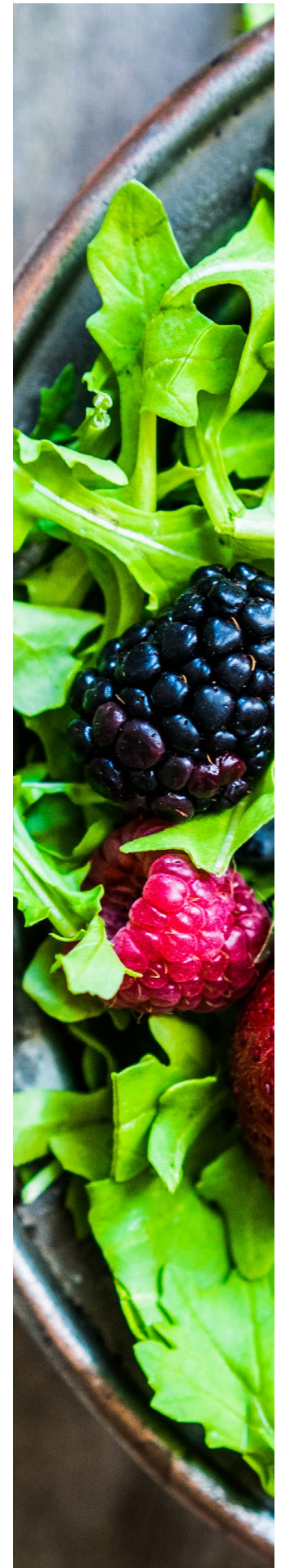
Mediterranean  
wellness



## ***HEALTHY MEETING***

# Toolkit





This toolkit was developed by Mediterranean Wellness, which creates tools and resources for its clients who want to create a well workplace for their employees. These tools and resources include programs, challenges, support materials, and self-care guides in nutrition, physical activity, stress, and biometrics. Each is created to provide recommendations toward living a lifestyle that leads to low weight, healthy hearts, and longer lives.

This document is written for any group that holds meetings and wants to make them as healthy as they can be. That said, clients should use this as a framework for being creative. Adopt the principles of a healthy workplace environment, and then implement the specifics based on the local conditions.



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## Sample Menus

### DRINKS

Make water available. If it is around to be had, it will be consumed and its consumption will become the norm. If you have water in pitchers that employees pour into glasses, you can make it a bit less boring by adding slices of lemon or lime to put into it.

100% fruit or vegetable juice is great, but keep the volume low. Additionally, fruit juice that contains pulp is better because the fiber helps to moderate the body's uptake of the sugars within the drink.

Tea and coffee are excellent drinks to have at any meeting. However, the key to keeping them healthful is to provide them plain. Don't set out pre-sweetened cans of tea or "coffee drinks." If the employees want to add something to their tea or coffee, you can make that available for them. However, if you put out plain coffee and tea (regular and decaf), they'll be more likely to have them plain.

Like water, you can make tea more appealing by making sliced lemons available.

As for the sweeteners, brown sugar is the best of all natural sweeteners. For those who are diabetic, the healthiest artificial sweeteners are the steviosides (Truvia, Stevia, etc). Saccharine, Nutrasweet, and Splenda are never recommended.

For those who need dairy in their coffee or tea, include dairy. Coffee "creamer" is never recommended.



# Sample Menus: Breakfast

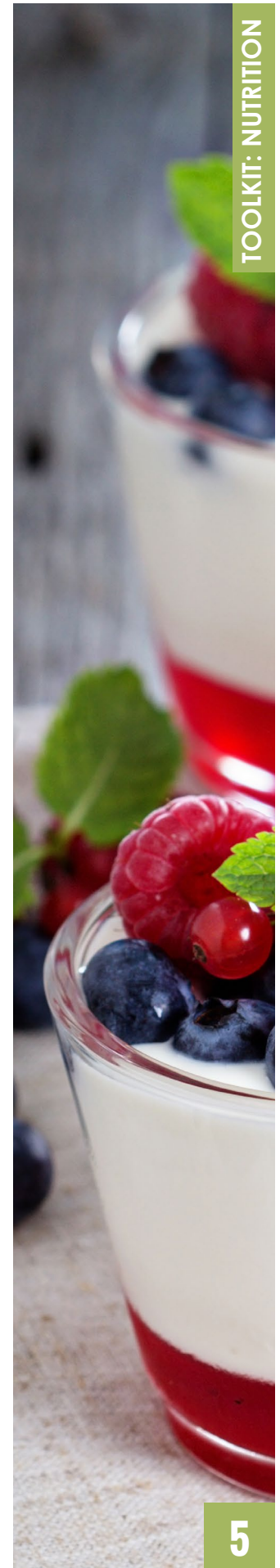
## BREAKFAST

For breakfast meetings, the temptation is to go to a store and purchase a pastry tray and be done with it. Those pastries, however, are terrible for you. Because of how their simple sugars impact your insulin/blood sugar balance, your employees will be tired and hungry within 90 minutes. This, in turn, will make them move less, eat more, be less attentive, and, therefore, way less productive.

Many healthy foods have carbohydrates, but the key is to balance any morning carbs with nutrients that prevent the sugar spike/crash cycle from happening. Those nutrients include fat, fiber, and protein.

We will include some specific suggestions below.

- Always serve fruit. Fresh fruit is more likely to be consumed when it is already sliced into bite-sized pieces.
- Oatmeal (but not the little “oatmeal” packets). Include cinnamon, brown sugar, nuts, and/or dried fruit.
- Plain yogurt with berries, cut fruit, or granola.
- Fiber-rich, whole grain breads such as small whole grain bagels (3 ½ inch diameter) or full size bagels cut in quarters, whole wheat English muffins, or whole wheat toast.
- Spreads like peanut butter, other nut butters, cream cheese, or hummus.
- Scrambled eggs, with vegetables (bell peppers, spinach, onions, mushrooms, tomatoes).
- Breakfast burrito filled with scrambled eggs, onions, peppers, black beans, and salsa rolled in a whole grain tortilla.





## Sample Menus: Lunch

Lunch meetings are the most common worksite meeting held. These frequently occur in a more relaxed setting. Information is presented that is commented upon in an informal manner, while those in the room enjoy lunch. Organizers often make it easy by ordering sandwiches, a couple of sides, and drinks. Many healthy foods have carbohydrates, but the key is to balance any carbs with nutrients that prevent the sugar spike/crash cycle from happening. Those nutrients include fat, fiber, and protein.

### Sandwich Suggestions

**Breads:** Whole grain breads or wraps are better and you should choose these if possible.

Sliced breads are better than submarine sandwich breads. If the sandwiches you're ordering are on hoagie or sub rolls, the amount of bread will be too large. In this case, it is better to choose pitas, wraps, or sliced breads.

If you have crackers for dips, the best choice is seed crackers, followed by whole grain crackers, and then corn chips. Just be careful with corn chips as they often have too much salt in them.

**Meats:** Sliced sandwich meats are healthier when they're lighter, following this order: turkey, chicken, ham, roast beef, pastrami. For meats that are whole (not sliced for sandwiches) all seafood is terrific, such as tuna, shrimp, or salmon. Next, baked or grilled chicken is excellent, followed by pork, then beef.

The caveat to the meats is that they are lean, and not deep fat fried in any fashion.

**Vegetables:** It's very hard to go wrong with a list of vegetables. The most common lunchtime vegetables are those set out for DIY sandwiches: lettuce, raw spinach, tomatoes, bell peppers (fresh or roasted), cucumbers, avocados, and onions. Salads are also a common choice and, again, it is difficult to go wrong with these.

The caveat is in the salad dressings. The healthiest salad dressing is olive oil and vinegar. The small packets of salad dressing – even those that come from “healthy brands” must be reviewed for salt, for sugar, and for calories. Salad dressings have the greatest potential for making salads unhealthy. So remember this rule: the less ingredients, the better it is for you.

**Sides:** Egg, hummus, white/black bean spread, baba ganoush (egg plant spread), pita for dipping, sliced bell peppers, low-salt nuts, pasta salad, cole slaw, etc.

# Sample Menus: Lunch

## Boxed Lunches

When ordering a boxed lunch for your group, choose a salad and half sandwich that includes a range of choices. Ask the caterer to substitute fruit for the cookie and chips, and provide water instead of soda.

## Cheese

If you are getting sliced cheeses for your DIY sandwich table, the key is to NOT get the “cheese food” because it isn’t actually food. Better choices are a provolone or straight cheddar.

Cheese is often served along with a fruit tray, which makes an excellent combination nutritionally and from a taste perspective. As a matter of fact, this can be an excellent thing to have for a dessert for the group.

## When You Bring In Main Dishes

Especially for larger group lunches, it is convenient to cater the larger casserole tins for buffet in conference rooms. Some of these are better than others, but the main concern for your worksite wellness program is going to be over-serving. This can be helped by making sure you include small or medium sized plates. If employees feel like they need more food, they can come back for seconds.

Meats are often broiled, baked, grilled, poached, sautéed, or roasted. The healthier meats will follow the same rules as mentioned above: fish, lighter meats, darker meats. Stay away from breaded and fried meats, regardless of their type.

Other main dishes can include pasta with sauces. The best sauces to include are red marinara sauce or green pesto sauce. White alfredo sauce is very high calorie, and has far less nutritional value. DIY pasta plates offer the opportunity for grilled vegetables alongside the pasta and sauce.





TOOLKIT: NUTRITION

## Sample Menus: Swappable Items

BREAKFAST	
GO	NO GO
100% juice	"Juice" drinks
Water	Dyed sugar water
Fresh fruit	Fruit in heavy syrup
Normal yogurt with fruit on the side	Low fat yogurt with fruit on the bottom
Small whole grain bagels made from real ingredients	Doughnuts
Bagel Toppers should be peanut butter, cream cheese, hummus, or other nut butter	Margarine, jelly, or syrup



LUNCH	
GO	NO GO
Olive oil and vinegar salad dressing	Low-fat or prepackaged dressings
Vegetable based soups or chili	Soups with high sodium content
Whole grain pasta salads with vegetables	Pasta salads with added sugar
Sandwiches on whole grain sliced breads	Sandwiches on white bread, or gigantic sub rolls
Lean meats, poultry, fish, tofu (3g fat/oz)	Fried or processed meats
Roasted or baked regular or sweet potatoes	Deep fat fried potatoes
Roasted, sautéed, or grilled veggies with herbs	Tempura or other breaded veggie concoctions
Vegetable plate with hummus or other natural salsa or dip	Ranch, Russian, French or other bottled dressing







# Sample Menus: Swappable Items



## LUNCH

### GO

Whole grain bread with olive oil or real butter

Desserts such as fresh fruit, solid dark chocolate, sherbet, or sorbet

### NO GO

Oleo or margarine

Items with simple sugars such as pastries, candies, caramels, etc.



## SNACKS

### GO

Cut fruit

Cut up vegetables

Whole grain or seed crackers

Plain popcorn

Plain yogurt with berries

### NO GO

Cookies

Potato chips

Crackers made from refined grains

Caramel corn

Ice cream bars



## Physical Activity: Tips

### Why Is This Important?

The workplace meeting is important for employee education, instruction, and planning. Adding activity to these events adds all the benefits of activity on top of the value of the meeting itself.

Research clearly shows that activity enhances concentration, productivity, and energy levels. This is especially important for those who work in more sedentary desk environments and do not get 30 minutes of moderate activity per day. Providing more opportunities for this during your meeting or conference, helps employees attain those many benefits for themselves and for their company.

An added benefit is the visible commitment you show. This in itself cultivates healthier social norms around exercise, which encourages new ways to incorporate physical activity into their daily lives.

### Activity Strategies

This can be tricky. After all, you are in a work environment meeting in which you're supposed to get work done. It's not a gym break. It's not recess. It's a working meeting.

For this reason, the strategies you may deploy in order to add activity to a healthy meeting will depend on the kind of corporate culture you happen to have.

1. If you work in a setting in which you have little tolerance for anything other than getting work done, you may need to make activity flow as a natural part of the meeting, and not as an overt add-on that distracts from the course of the point of the meeting itself.
2. Alternatively, if you have management support for taking 15 minutes within the meeting for some form of activity, you will simply have more options.

As you put together activity as a part of a healthy workplace meeting, keep in mind your particular culture of health, and plan accordingly.

# Physical Activity: FAQ

## What About Participants with Disabilities?

Give participants the opportunity to inform you of any special physical access needs ahead of the meeting or when registering for the meeting.

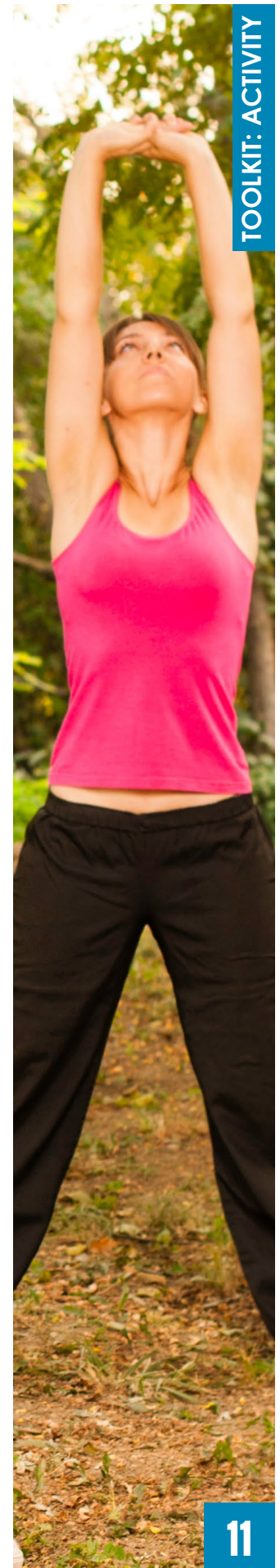
Adapt activities to the situations as you can, even if they are minor modifications like slowing down the pace or performing activities while seated versus standing.

## What If We're Not Dressed For Activity?

The activities you incorporate into a healthy workplace meeting will not be those that require extra clothes, a gym bag, or for you to towel off afterwards. These physical activity opportunities may involve light stretching, walking, and other movements that are simple to do.

## Won't physical activity distract us from the work we are supposed to be getting done in the meeting?

Actually, just the reverse. Punctuating prolonged effort on work with the mental and physical break of some form of activity increases attention and focus so that employees can be more productive as a result.





## Physical Activity

### On Your Mark

**Safety First:** If you are doing an activity outside, make sure you have proper lighting, safe sidewalks, and visible pedestrian signs. If your activity is inside, make sure there is enough room for the movements to be done. If there is arm swinging for example, ensure proper spacing. Be sure to allow everyone to move at their own pace.

Make sure to let people know that if they feel weak or light-headed that it is perfectly fine not to participate.

**Meeting Materials:** Unless there are specific activities to perform that require precise direction, you really don't need materials. All information provided should be able to be explained verbally around the table or room.

### Get Set

Prior to the meeting start, let the group know that you will be adding activities periodically. They are encouraged to participate, but of course are not required. If there are incentive prizes that you will give away, let them know that up front as well. If you have someone who is an upbeat motivating individual, let that person lead the activity.

### GO!

#### Our Suggestions

##### Stand For It:

1. Organized: After 20 minutes, participants must stand for 5.
2. As they will: Simply let them know that they are free (and encouraged) to stand and move about during the meeting if they like.

##### Walk About It:

1. Small group meetings (2-5 persons) can be more productive when they are taken as walking meetings. In inclement weather, these can be done inside as well.
2. An excellent thing to do in meetings is to have two small groups working on the same problem or issue, have them walk in different directions, and come back in 20 minutes to discuss their respective conclusions.

# Physical Activity

## Active Support:

1. Show Your Support: If you agree with something said, applaud. If you really agree, stand and applaud. Standing to applaud will quickly become “a thing,” indicating how much an employee likes an idea.
2. Musical Chairs: If someone doesn't contribute to the conversation, they have to stand and switch chairs with anyone else. This gets them to move, puts them by others in the company, and encourages contribution in the meetings!

## Stay On The Ball!:

Bring an exercise stability ball to the meeting. Choose someone (say, someone who normally doesn't contribute) and let them know that they will be “on the ball” until they make a contribution, then they will switch chairs with the person of their choice.

This adds fun, movement, and contribution to your meetings.

## No Bathroom Breaks!

It's not what you think. Of course, you're going to let them go to the bathroom if they need to. This is a matter of calling it something different.

If you say, “We're going to take a bathroom break (oh, and by the way you can move around if you like).” Then, some will go and most will just sit and wait. However, if you take an activity break (oh, and by the way you can go to the restroom if you like), more people will engage in the group activities.

Schedule brief activity breaks, 10-15 minutes at a time, at least every hour or so. Participants can walk around on their own, or someone can lead interested participants in a brief stretching break. Include this break time in the meeting agenda.

## What To Do During These Breaks:

Do a quick survey of the group, asking them by a show of hands which muscles are the most tense for them: hips, lower back, upper back, shoulders, etc. Then, show them chair stretches they can do for those particular muscle groups (Contact MedWellness for stretches).





## Physical Activity

### Other Simple Chair Exercises

Toe raises, knee lifts, arm circles, stretch bands, marching in place, side-to-side arm swings, or arm reaches.

### Sweeten The Pot:

Provide incentives for being active. For longer meetings, for example, provide pedometers for participants and those with the greatest activity increase through the day get a prize.

**Possible Incentives:** Water bottles, FitBit style pedometers, gym bag, fanny pack, backpack, Frisbee, Thermos, baseball hat, fitness club membership, gift card to athletic store, dance lessons.