

National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity Meeting Guidance

Introduction

Creating a culture of health and wellness in meetings and conferences is an important way to help people eat well and be physically active, foster healthier work environments, and cultivate social norms around healthier choices and behaviors. Supporting healthy food and beverage choices, providing physical activity opportunities, requiring a tobacco-free environment, and promoting sustainability are the areas of focus for the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA) meeting and conference guidance. A toolkit to support adoption of the guidance is available at: www.healthymeeting.org

General Recommendations

- Support healthier choices, provide leadership and role modeling, and help to create a social norm around healthier choices and behaviors.
- Offer nutritious food and beverage options.
 - Offer recommended servings of fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, especially for all-day meetings.
 - Place healthier foods and beverages in prominent positions, where they are most likely to be seen and more likely to be chosen.
 - Post calories in worksite cafeterias and at conferences and meetings when appropriate and/or possible.
- Provide reasonable portions of foods and beverages (i.e., avoid large portions).
- Consider not serving food at breaks that are not mealtimes; instead provide physical activity.
- Ensure healthier options are attractively presented, appealing, and taste good.
- Offer physical activity opportunities that are relevant to the audience and environment to help people achieve at least 30 minutes of physical activity each day.
- Provide a tobacco-free environment.
- Prioritize sustainable practices when possible, by minimizing waste, encouraging recycling, and sourcing products from sustainable producers.
- Evaluate efforts to hold healthy meetings and conferences and make adjustments over time to continue to improve the acceptability and healthfulness of choices.

Nutrition: Beverages

Standard Healthy Meeting

- Make water the default beverage.
- Do not offer full-calorie sugar-sweetened beverages. Serve 100% juice, 100% juice diluted with water, low-fat or non-fat milk, calcium and vitamin D-fortified soymilk, or beverages with 40 calories per container or less.
- Offer low-fat or non-fat milk with coffee and tea service in addition to or in place of half and half.

Superior Healthy Meeting

Includes all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations, plus the following:

- Eliminate all sugar-sweetened beverages (including those with less than 40 calories per container that are allowed under the Standard Healthy Meeting).

Nutrition: Food

Standard Healthy Meeting

- Offer fruits and/or vegetables every time food is served.
- Offer reasonable portion sizes.
- In buffet lines or self-service, support sensible portions by offering reasonably-sized entrees and appropriately-sized serving utensils and plates.
- Use whole grains whenever possible (100% whole grain or whole grain as the first ingredient).
- Serve healthier condiments and dressings and offer them on the side.
- Look for and try to offer lower-sodium options.
- Make the majority of the meat options poultry, fish, shellfish, or lean (unprocessed) meat.
- Provide a vegetarian option.

Nutrition: Food (continued)

Standard Healthy Meeting (continued)

- For special occasions and dinner, cut desserts in half or serve small portions. For lunches, breaks, or regular meetings serve fruit as dessert.
- Do not place candy or candy bowls in the meeting space.
- Whenever possible, offer foods prepared in a healthy way (grilled, baked, poached, roasted, braised, or broiled). Avoid fried foods.

Superior Healthy Meeting

Includes all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations, plus the following:

- All grains must be whole grain-rich (51% or more whole grains by weight or whole grain as the first ingredient).
- Serve only poultry, fish, shellfish, or on occasion lean (unprocessed) meat options; seek alternatives to processed and red meats.
- Replace all desserts and pastries with fruit or other healthful foods.
- Do not serve fried foods.
- If there is the capacity to do nutrient analyses or if the caterer can provide nutrient information, meals should meet the nutrition standards in Appendix A in the toolkit at: www.healthymeeting.org

Physical Activity

Standard Healthy Meeting

- Mention to attendees (through announcements or in written materials) that it is fine to move within the meeting space (standing, stretching); integrate exercise equipment if possible within the space (exercise balls in place of some chairs, raised tables for standing).
- When possible, allow for comfortable clothes/shoes to support physical activity during breaks.
- Periodically break up sitting time.
- For conferences or all-day meetings, support physical activity before, during, and after the work of the day.
- Provide adapted programming or alternative activities for those with physical disabilities.
- Identify someone to facilitate a short physical activity break(s).

Superior Healthy Meeting

Includes all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations, plus the following:

- Try to choose meeting/conference locations where there are walkable destinations; provide walking/running maps.
- Only contract with hotels that have a fitness facility available at no cost to attendees. If the hotel does not have a fitness facility, contract with a local exercise facility.
- Provide exercise stations in the hall or within the meeting room.
- Implement walking meetings when possible.

Sustainability

Standard Healthy Meeting

- Reduce waste and packaging whenever possible.
- Consider appeal to meeting attendees, sustainability, and usefulness of conference giveaways.
- Have recycling bins available.
- Provide handouts on a flash drive or make them available online to reduce paper.

Superior Healthy Meeting

Includes all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations, plus the following:

- Conduct a zero-waste meeting or conference.
- Use locally-sourced and sustainably-produced food and giveaways when possible.

Tobacco-Free

Standard Healthy Meeting

- Meetings should be held in smoke-free facilities.

Superior Healthy Meeting

Includes all Standard Healthy Meeting recommendations, plus the following:

- A tobacco-free environment is provided at all times.
- Choose to host your conference in a city with a comprehensive smoke-free policy that includes restaurants and bars.