

The Weight Control Center's Newsletter

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Healthier Eating at Work: Overcoming Daily Challenges

The workplace presents many obstacles to healthy eating, but with a little planning, these can be predicted and managed. Common challenges include a lack of time, stress, and celebrations with high calorie choices. While we don't have to deprive ourselves all the time to be healthy, some tricky situations arise time and again, so having a few go-to solutions will mean you can focus on your work instead of worrying about calories. Below are ideas to help limit calories while maintaining balance:

Challenge #1: Time. **X-Café** has Greek yogurt; protein bars (best choices: KIND, Luna, Zone Perfect, Go Lean Crisp & Gnu Bar); protein drinks (best choices: Muscle Milk & Odwalla Protein; others are high in sugar); string cheese; nuts; 100 cal packs of stick pretzels; Soy Crisps; chicken sandwiches w/o mayo; chef salads; and Greek wraps. **Wendy's Chili** is well-balanced with protein, fiber and flavor. To satisfy a sweet craving, order a **Jr. Frosty** (200 cals, 20% daily calcium) or pick up fruit from a street cart. At **Chipotle**, skip the tortilla (300 cals) & chips (570 cals) and order a chicken or steak **Burrito Bowl** with veggies, black beans, and small scoop of brown rice. Ask for a 2nd container and put in half. Split with a pal or save for leftovers.

Challenge #2: Stress Cravings. **First**, drink water or tea since sweet cravings may be a sign of dehydration. **Second**, think about when you last ate. If it was 3+ hours ago, try eating a meal and see if you still want that craved food after. A study in *Appetite* showed eating craved foods when hungry reinforces their appeal. **Third**, check in with yourself about what's bothering you while taking a few deep breaths with your eyes closed or getting up from your desk. These small steps can help you to refocus, reduce the stress response and may lessen the appeal of the craved food.

Challenge #3: Work celebrations. While delicious, **Carrot Top's** cakes are calorie-laden. **Edible Arrangements** is a delicious option that won't cause a sugar slump. For those who think celebrations aren't the same without chocolate, Edible Arrangements has chocolate dipped options! Replacing cake with fruit even a few times a year will save on calories. Or take the focus off food and put the money towards an Amazon Gift Card. Your colleagues – and your waistline – will thank you!

Want to be Active, but Short on Time?

Evidence suggests that overweight, older, and "at-health risk" individuals can safely do **interval training**, a fitness regimen that combines alternating bouts of high and low intensity exercise. A full set of intervals can be completed in as little as 20 minutes, and it produces health benefits while decreasing all-cause mortality. Interval training may include **low-impact workouts on the bike or ergometer** and can be increased as fitness levels improve. Participants also reported decreased boredom and greater adherence.

If interval training sounds too intense or is deemed unsuitable for you by your physician, activities comparable to **walking 15 minutes 6 days a week may increase life expectancy by 3 years**, according to a recent study in the Lancet. Fifteen minutes may sound low, but if your current norm is less, it's a great goal and one that can lead to improved health, especially if you build up from 15 to 20-30 minutes a day.

Beginner Interval Training Program*:

- Start with a 5-10 minute warm-up on a treadmill.
- Walk at 3.5 mph for 30 seconds. Then walk at 2.5 mph for 2minutes. Increase the higher intensity interval as fitness improves.
- Repeat this cycle 5 times.
- End with a 5 minute cool-down.
- Initially, try this routine 1 day per week and progress to 3 or 4 days per week.

*Play it safe: Consult with your physician before making any changes in your physical activity routine.

Delicious Summertime Snacks



A little preparation goes a long way. Before road trips, picnics and vacations, write out a plan of what healthy snacks to bring. Save indulgences for the times when you can really enjoy them!

Freeze it: Place cubed **watermelon**, **cantaloupe** or **honeydew** in a freezer bag or plastic container in the freezer. Use a fork or your fingers to eat. Frozen **bananas** and **grapes** taste great too.

Pack it: In a cooler, pack **baby carrots**, **sliced cucumbers**, **celery** and **red peppers**. Dip in hummus, Laughing Cow Light (no refrigeration necessary), or a Greek yogurt dip. Try Oikos French Onion Dip- half the calories of most dips and delicious!

Bottle it: Dehydration can lead to sweet cravings. If you're tired of plain water, try flavored seltzer or add slices of **cucumber** and **lemon** with **mint leaves** to a pitcher of tap water. Chill and serve.

Stow it: KIND Bars are a quick snack that's portion-controlled and won't melt if left in your bag. A plastic baggie filled with either **24 almonds or cashews**, **16 walnuts** or **1/4 cup pistachios or sunflower seeds** is also a portable and satisfying snack under 200 calories.

Call us for more information about our weight control group sessions or to schedule an individual appointment with one of our endocrinologists or dietitian.