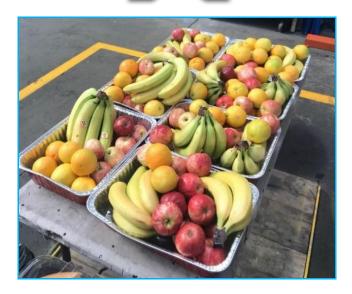


Healthy Eating Background Information



Why is it important?

We eat about a third of our day's food at work, so the workplace is an ideal place to help staff make healthy choices.

Many factors within the workplace have a significant role in influencing what and how people eat at work. These are:

- choice, availability and cost of different food and drink options at work
- promotion and marketing of food and drink choices
- working practices in the workplace (such as workload, hours of work)
- facilities available for preparing and buying food and drinks buying and/or
- dietary habits of workmates
- each staff members knowledge and skills around healthy food

Healthy eating is about eating a variety of foods from the <u>four food groups</u>. The <u>Eating and Activity</u> <u>Guidelines</u> recommend the food and drink a workplace provides should include:

- plenty of vegetables and fruit
- grain foods, mostly wholegrain and those naturally high in fibre
- some milk and milk products, mostly low and reduced fat
- some legumes (such as chickpeas and lentils), nuts, seeds, or fish and other seafood, eggs or poultry, or red meat with the fat removed
- Food should be mostly prepared with or contain minimal saturated fat, salt (sodium) and added sugar. It should be mostly whole or less processed
- Plain water and unflavored milk should be the predominant cold drink options

Facts

Supporting your staff to make healthy food choices is in the best interest of your workplace. The <u>benefits</u> <u>to your workplace</u> include:

- Reduced absenteeism healthy staff tend to take less sick leave and are generally less likely to develop ongoing conditions.
- Reduced accident rates healthy staff are less likely to be fatigued so are more alert to safety issues and less likely to be injured.
- Supports staff mental <u>well-being</u> a balanced healthy diet can reduce the risk of depression, whilst excessive consumption of unhealthy foods can exacerbate depression and anxiety.



Healthy Eating Background Information

<u>Eating healthy</u> food reduces our chances of developing nutrition-related diseases such as:

- Cardiovascular/heart conditions
- high blood pressure
- high cholesterol
- type 2 diabetes
- kidney failure
- some cancers

Key Messages for your workplace

- Working adults consume a third of their daily food intake during work hours
- Many factors within the workplace have a significant role in influencing what and how people eat at work.
- Creating a workplace that supports staff to make healthy food choices can help reduce absenteeism and workplace injuries
- Food and drink provided by a workplace should align to the <u>Eating and Activity Guidelines</u> for New Zealand Adults as much as possible.