



Beverages

- Ensure that clean, cool water is always available at no cost.
- Present water as an attractive and appealing option. Garnish pitchers of water with citrus or cucumber slices or provide citrus wedges in a bowl.
- Offer sparkling water instead of soda.
- Offer decaffeinated as well as caffeinated coffee and tea.
- Serve coffee and tea unsweetened. Provide fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk or non-dairy creamer instead of half and half or whole milk.
- Offer juices that provide more beneficial nutrients, like orange and grapefruit.

Nutrition Standards for Beverages

- Water (plain, sparkling and flavored) – no more than 10 calories per serving
- Fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk and milk alternatives (soy, almond, etc.) – no more than 130 calories per 8 fl. oz.
- Juice – 100% fruit or vegetable juice (or juice and water)
 - No added sugars/sweeteners (except non-nutritive sweeteners)
 - No more than 120 calories per 8 fl. oz. (preferred serving size), 150 calories per 10 fl. oz., or 180 calories per 12 fl. oz.
- Other beverages – no more than 10 calories per serving

Healthier Snack Ideas

- Fresh fruit – apples, bananas, berries, cantaloupe, grapes, melon, oranges, pineapple
- Fruit tray or fruit kabobs
- Apple sauce, unsweetened
- Dried fruits (with little or no added sugars) – apples, apricots, blueberries, cranberries, raisins

- Fresh vegetables – bell peppers, broccoli, carrots, cauliflower, celery, cherry tomatoes, edamame, snap peas, zucchini
- Whole-grain crackers
- Baked whole-grain pita chips
- Dips – if needed, try hummus, salsa, guacamole, bean dip, nut butter, baba ganoush, yogurt and other “light” dips
- Roasted or raw nuts (unsalted or very lightly salted) – almonds, hazelnuts, peanuts, pecans, pistachios, walnuts
- “Build Your Own Trail Mix” bar – dried fruit, unsweetened if available (raisins, blueberries, dates); nuts (almonds, peanuts, pecans, walnuts); seeds (pumpkin, sunflower); cereal (whole grain); no chocolate or candy
- Yogurt (fat-free/low-fat)
- Pretzels or hot pretzels cut in pieces (unsalted or lightly salted)
- Light popcorn (unsalted or lightly salted)
- Rice cakes – look for whole-grain/brown rice
- Graham crackers (preferably whole-grain)
- Whole-wheat bagels – mini or cut in fourths, with non-fat/low-fat cream cheese
- Cheese (non-fat/low-fat/light) in individual portion packs

Nutrition Standards for Snacks (except plain nuts and nut/fruit mixes)

- No more than 200 calories per label serving
- Choose items with the lowest amount of sodium – no more than 240 mg of sodium per label serving (preferably no more than 140 mg)
- Zero g *trans* fat per label serving and no products containing partially hydrogenated oils
- No more than 1 g of saturated fat
- No candy (sugar-free mints and gum are OK)
- No regular chips (baked chips and pretzels are OK)

Nutrition Standards for Plain Nuts and Nut/Fruit Mixes

- Preferred serving size for plain nuts is 1 oz. but no more than 1.5 oz.
- Choose products with the lowest amount of sodium – no more than 140 mg of sodium per label serving

Meals

- Ensure healthier options are attractively presented, well-lit and appealing in name and appearance. On buffets, place healthier options in prominent positions at the start of the line, where they are more likely to be seen and chosen.
- Provide reasonable (not large) portions of foods and beverages. Cut large portions in halves or quarters when possible (e.g., bagels, sandwiches). If meat is served, a portion ideally should be 3 oz. and no more than 6 oz.
- Ask for foods to be prepared with minimal salt, if salt is needed at all.
- Offer at least one fruit and/or vegetable serving every time food is served. Aim for filling half the plate with vegetables and fruits.
- When serving appetizers, select those that provide a serving of fruit, vegetables, whole grains or legumes.
- If multiple entrees are offered (such as on a buffet), make one entree fish (preferably oily fish). Include a vegetarian option when possible.
- Provide dessert only for a special occasion dinner such as a gala. If a dessert is required, fresh fruit and fruit-based desserts are better choices.
- Ask attendees in advance about any special dietary needs or restrictions (vegetarian/vegan, food allergies, etc.) and plan accordingly.

Avoid serving:

- High-sugar breakfast cereals
- Bakery items, biscuits, corn bread, croissants, Danishes, muffins, pastries, etc.
- High-sodium, high-fat meats such as bacon, sausage or ham
- Heavy, high-fat sauces such as Bordelaise, Hollandaise, Alfredo, cheese sauce, sour cream sauce
- Fried foods
- Regular chips
- Dishes with cheese as a key ingredient, such as au gratin potatoes, cheese soufflé or macaroni and cheese
- Cookies and desserts

Nutrition Standards for Meals

- No more than 700 calories
- No more than 800 mg sodium (preferably no more than 525 mg)
- No more than 5 g saturated fat
- No more than 105 mg cholesterol
- Less than 0.5 g *trans* fat and no products containing partially hydrogenated oils
- At least 2 servings (1-1.5 cups) of vegetables and/or fruits