Plan a healthy workplace diet

Most of us spend the majority of our time at work, often making it challenging to stick to a healthy lifestyle. From pastry-laden brainstorms to lunchtime meetings, the workplace can be full of temptation.

But with a little planning, you can stay healthy while at work and not only hit your career-related goals, but also achieve your health ones:

- **Eat breakfast**: It is true that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. It provides your body energy and makes it easier to control your diet. By skipping it, you’re likely to get hungry later and resort to grabbing the first doughnut in sight. **Make a habit of eating at home or pre-packing your breakfast each morning.**

- **Plan ahead**: Being prepared is the key to eating right at work. **Packing portable snacks means you’ll never be without healthy options when hunger strikes.** Veggies, fruit or whole grain crackers are nutritious options to have on hand.

- **Out of sight, out of mind**: It’s much easier to avoid temptation when you can’t see it. **Close the lid on the donuts, move the bagels to the kitchen and take alternate routes so that you don’t have to walk past the candy dish.**

- **Stay hydrated**: Workplace health isn’t just about food. Thirst often masquerades as hunger, causing you to snack even when you’re not hungry. **To avoid this, keep a refillable water bottle on your desk and set reoccurring reminders to drink up.**

- **Get moving**: Sitting all day can be detrimental to our health. Whenever possible, take a walk, climb the stairs or stretch at your desk to keep your body, and mind, active.

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Tips to make summer travel a breeze

As we plan now for summer trips and vacations, there are a number of ways to prepare in advance. Frequent travellers have learned from experience and many of them are happy to offer guidance on aspects like researching, safety and fun so we can all travel smarter. Here are a few tried and true tips:

- **Pack like a flight attendant**: Roll your clothes to save space and prevent wrinkles.

- **Place tea bags in your shoes** to keep them, and the other contents of your suitcase, smelling fresh.

- **Take a photo or scan your passport and ID then email it to yourself**. If the original goes missing you’ll have a backup copy. It’s also helpful to have a printed photocopy on hand.

- **Consider booking direct with your hotel so you can ask about a “best price guarantee.”**

- **Invest in a good pair of walking shoes and don’t bring your whole wallet with you.**

- **Make sure your carry-on luggage meets size requirements.**

- **Read up on destination blogs before your trip.**

- **Don’t forget to call your credit card company to tell them of your travel plans.** If you don’t, transactions on your card may look suspicious. This measure will prevent your account from being locked while you’re abroad.
Ways to get sunscreen on your kids

You are not alone if you struggle to get sunscreen on your kids every summer. Sometimes the last thing our kids want to do is sit still long enough to get sunscreen applied to their face and body. Try these tips:

■ Start a timer and challenge your kids to keep still long enough for you to apply the sunscreen before the timer goes off. Then you can challenge them to do a scan to ensure you haven’t missed any spots.

■ Apply sunscreen at snack time, giving it time to soak in while your kids finish their tasty treats before heading out into the sun.

■ Apply your own sunscreen first. Children always want to imitate their parents so let them know that as soon as you’re done with yourself, they’re up next.

Tips to help stop cyberbullying

Today’s connected world offers a lot of conveniences from banking to ordering pizza, but it also brings negative things that you can feel powerless against. Cyberbullying is one of those things.

Growing up has never been easy, but the threat of cyberbullying makes it even more tricky. You can help your child feel safe by providing the tools and support to safely connect with others.

Here are three ways that parents can work with their kids to halt cyberbullying and make the Internet safer:

1. Listen and Engage
Talking to your kids about cyberbullying is essential. Have regular conversations about their Internet activities and what they witness online. Be ready to listen to your teen and be their advocate. Cyberbullying can quickly escalate and requires swift adult intervention.

Inevitably, your child will interact with peers online, most often through a smartphone. Ask them to do so in common spaces so you can keep an open dialogue.

2. Keep Records
If you do need to confront a cyberbullying issue, thorough records will help. Encourage kids to save threatening emails, social media postings, and other hostile chats. Also, regularly check browser history and save anything that raises an alarm.

3. Understand the Options for Intervening
Talk to your children about their choices for addressing cyberbullying. Teens especially can reach out to comfort a target, or talk to school administrators, like teachers or principals, and in extreme cases, bring the issue to the police. Parents should always offer guidance along the way.

Health tips fun facts and other trivia from around the web

Strange bed does equal bad sleep

There’s actually a scientific reason behind why people don’t sleep soundly in an unfamiliar place. According to a study published in the journal Current Biology, only half your brain enters deep sleep when you try to go to bed in a strange, new location. Researchers at Brown University studied the brain wave patterns of 35 students, finding that their slow-wave activity — which occurs when the brain has entered deep sleep — was significantly higher in the right hemisphere during the first night of the study. But after the first night, that difference tapered out, leading researchers to conclude that the brain adjusted after it became familiar with the sleep setting.

The evolutionary advantage this brain trait provides is probably less useful to modern humans — making us experience less restful sleep when we spend the night at a hotel or friend’s house, for example — but in the animal kingdom, this trait still helps marine mammals such as dolphins, whales, and seals respond to threats, Scientific American reports.

What’s that funky smell?

Contrary to popular belief, it’s not actually sweat itself that smells. Sweat itself is actually odorless. It’s fatty acids in sweat, and then convert them into bad B.O., also known as bromhidrosis, that stinks. It happens when bacteria feed on the proteins and fatty acids in sweat, and then convert them into bad smelling chemicals.
Health tips fun facts and other trivia from around the web

Fun facts about your eyes

We don’t often give our eyes as much thought as until something goes wrong and our vision is affected. Here are a few interesting facts about your eyes according to discoveryeye.org:

1. Your eyes start to develop two weeks after you are conceived.
2. The entire length of all the eyelashes shed by a human in their life is over 98 feet with each eye lash having a life span of about 5 months.
3. To protect our eyes they are positioned in a hollowed eye socket, while eyebrows prevent sweat dripping into your eyes and eyelashes keep dirt out of your eyes.
4. Your eyeballs stay the same size from birth to death, while your nose and ears continue to grow.”

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Spots where germs like to lurk

Germs are everywhere—at home, in the office, even in your car. Luckily, about 99% of them can’t harm us. But the other 1% can be annoying, uncomfortable, or downright scary. Here are two unusual places where germs like to lurk:

1. Kitchen faucet: That metal aeration screen at the end of the faucet is a total germ magnet. Running water keeps the screen moist, an ideal condition for bacteria growth. Once a week, remove the screen and soak it in a diluted bleach solution—follow the directions on the label. Replace the screen, and let the water run a few minutes before using.
2. Welcome mat: The welcome mat serves to greet not only your guests but also all the bugs on the bottoms of their shoes. In fact, one study found that nearly 96% of shoe soles had traces of coliform, which includes fecal bacteria. Spray the doormat once a week with a fabric-safe disinfectant (such as Lysol Disinfectant Spray). Leave shoes at the door, and avoid resting bags and groceries on the mat, too.

Ways to stay happy on the inside

Although the sun is shining outside, you might not be feeling bright on the inside. Sometimes we feel down in the dumps and are unsure of what’s causing this gloominess.

These feelings can often be attributed to a poor diet and bad sleep. Here are a few recommendations that can be implemented into any lifestyle:

Get some quality Z’s

Many of us overlook the benefits that sleep brings when it’s regular, consistent and sufficient. Lack of sleep — or even just poor sleep quality — can negatively affect many facets of our lives, from work productivity to personal relationships, to our overall mood. At its worst, sleep deprivation has been linked to an increased risk of heart attack, stroke, depression and other illnesses.

If you’re having trouble falling asleep because of jet lag, a sporadic work schedule, or from being exposed to the bright, blue light of your computer screen or smartphone at night, it’s important to make your sleeping environment as calming as possible. Try to keep the tv, phones and computers out of your room, use dark window coverings, and consider using a fan to create white noise in order to block out other noises from outside.

A healthy gut makes a happy person

Next time you think about heading to the junk food aisle, keep walking and check out some healthier alternatives instead. Although indulging your cravings may seem like a good idea at the time, making a habit out of junk foods can have negative effects on not only your body, but on your mind as well.

Foods that are high in complex carbohydrates and lean protein not only provide more energy for your body so you can stay active, but they have been found to increase the levels of serotonin in the brain. Serotonin is a chemical neurotransmitter that is thought to be a major factor in feelings of well-being and happiness. Other nutrients that can help improve mood are magnesium and vitamin D. Magnesium helps to regulate stress, and vitamin D keeps the immune system in check. If you’re having trouble getting enough of these nutrients from your diet, consider supplementation.

Consider aromatherapy

Scent has a powerful effect on our emotions and can affect how we perceive other people and our experiences. Similar to how scent can make or break a great meal, being surrounded by calming scents in your day-to-day life can improve your physical and emotional state.

According to the Mayo Clinic, research on the effectiveness of aromatherapy — the therapeutic use of essential oils extracted from plants — is limited. However, some studies have shown that aromatherapy might have health benefits, including:

- Improved quality of life, particularly for people with chronic health conditions.
- Relief from anxiety and depression.
- Improved quality of life, particularly for people with chronic health conditions.

It’s always important to talk with your personal health care provider before making any drastic changes to your lifestyle.
Golfing pain shouldn’t be par for the course
A little know-how can help golfers avoid unnecessary injury.

Considering the number of times a swing is repeated during a game, it’s not surprising that the season often ends early for those who are not physically prepared.

Below are a few simple stretching techniques that can help prevent or reduce the impact of injuries:

Side bending stretch
1. Stand with feet shoulder-width apart.
2. Hold the golf club above your head with your arms straight.
3. Slowly bend to one side, without rotating, until you feel a stretch in the side of your back.
4. Hold for 15 seconds and repeat twice for each side.

Shoulder stretch
1. Hold the shaft of a golf club vertically behind your back.
2. Gently pull the club up with your top hand until you feel a slight stretch in the shoulder of your lower arm. Hold for 15 seconds.
3. Gently pull the club down with your bottom hand until you feel a stretch in the top shoulder and arm.
4. Hold for 15 seconds.
5. Reverse hand positions and repeat.

Ways to improve mental strength
Mental strength is just like any other skill: It takes time to develop.
Amy Morin, an internationally recognized expert on mental strength and author of the book 13 Things Mentally Strong People Don’t Do, was asked what the mentally strong are doing.

In a recent article published in the Business Insider, Morin offered several tips to improve mental strength:

Monitor your emotions
People often assume mentally strong people suppress their emotions, but they are actually acutely aware of them. They monitor their emotions throughout the day and recognize how their feelings influence their thoughts and behaviors. They know sometimes reaching their greatest potential requires them to behave contrary to how they feel.

Practice realistic optimism
Having a positive outlook all the time is impossible, and too much negativity is counterproductive. Mentally strong people understand that their thoughts aren’t always true, and they strive to reframe their negativity. They replace exaggeratedly negative thoughts with a more realistic inner monologue.

Practice self-compassion
Rather than beating themselves up for making mistakes, mentally strong people practice self-compassion and speak to themselves as they would speak to a good friend. They respond to their inner critic as if they were standing up to the schoolyard bully. They forgive themselves for mistakes and cheer themselves on as they work toward their goals.

Fulfill your purpose
Successfully fulfilling your purpose in life takes time. Mentally strong people understand this and focus on the big picture, keeping in mind that today’s choices impact their future.

Fresh fruit pizza
When it comes to summer desserts, if you want to really razzle dazzle guests at your next party, think pizza – fruit pizza, that is. Kids and adults alike are wowed by this special dessert. And it couldn’t be simpler to make.

Fresh Fruit Pizza Tart
Makes 10 servings

1. Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Pat cookie dough into the bottom of a greased 10-inch tart pan. Bake for 10-12 minutes or until lightly browned. Cool completely.
2. In electric mixer, beat cream cheese and sour cream. Gradually add sugar; beat until completely mixed and fluffy. Spread mixture over entire surface of pan of baked cookie dough.
3. Arrange grapes and other fruit as desired, covering entire surface with fruit; press gently. Refrigerate until chilled.

To serve, slice it just as you would a regular pizza. If you want to add extra fun to your party, make several small personal-size pizzas and let kids get creative with their own designs using the grapes and kiwi. Don’t be surprised if adults decide to jump in and decorate their own pizzas, too. After all, who wants to miss out on summer fun?

Recipe from NC