

Creating an Environment for Success

Moving more and eating healthfully are easier when your environment supports your efforts.

This tip sheet provides simple, practical ideas for home and work environments to promote and assist you in meeting America On the Move® goals.

continued

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Success At Home

Adapting your home environment to reinforce your active, healthy lifestyle is easy when you use these ideas.

Create an environment that promotes more movement:

- Place your stationary bike or treadmill in a convenient place and set specific times to use it (like in the morning before work or while watching the news)
- Leave the room during TV commercials; use the break to put away dishes and laundry, or accomplish other tasks that add movement and help boost your daily steps
- Walk while talking on the phone; take your cell phone with you on a walk around the neighborhood
- Run errands without using your car — go to the bank, video store, cleaners, or convenience store on foot
- Make an evening walk as regular a routine as brushing your teeth in the morning

Fill your kitchen with smart food choices:

- Stock your cupboard with convenient low-calorie snacks like pretzels, rice crackers, low-fat popcorn, and graham crackers
- Prewash mini carrots, celery, grapes, and apples for quick snacks
- Have dairy products on hand like low-fat milk, yogurt, and cheese
- Satisfy chocolate cravings with low-fat pudding cups or frozen fudge bars
- Substitute ground turkey for beef; it decreases the calories, fat, and cholesterol of burgers or pasta dishes without sacrificing taste
- Keep canned and frozen veggies as quick side dishes or for pastas, soups, casseroles, and pizza
- Avoid large packages of chips, cookies, and other similar snacks (instead, get single servings when a craving strikes)
- Add black, garbanzo, or kidney beans to pasta dishes for more flavor, fiber, and protein
- Choose cuts of beef with labels that say round, lean, chuck, or loin
- Select no-sugar-added drinks like flavored water, iced tea, and low-fat milk to keep hydrated without adding calories
- Buy healthy, convenient breakfast foods like cereal, yogurt, fruit, and oatmeal — studies show that most people who maintain weight loss eat breakfast regularly

Purchase the right tools for food preparation:

- Use a steamer to cook veggies while preserving the nutrients and avoiding added fat — season with lemon juice, balsamic vinegar, olive oil, or fresh herbs
- Keep salads crispy by using a salad spinner — you'll need less salad dressing when your greens aren't coated with excess water
- Stock your cabinets with nonstick pans and cooking spray
- Spray pans and food with an oil mister — you'll use less oil and save calories

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Enjoy your meals and feel full on fewer calories:

- Savor your favorite food sparingly — there's no need to deny yourself when you monitor serving size
- Serve dinner on appetizer plates to control portions
- Start meals with salad or broth-based soup — you'll feel fuller and eat less of your main course
- Put your utensils down between bites to slow your eating pace
- Eat dinner at the table — talking with family members can help you avoid overeating before you feel full
- Listen to relaxing music while eating instead of sitting in front of the TV

Success At Work

Even with a hectic schedule, these tips can enhance your work environment for encouragement and support.

Choose foods and restaurants that support your efforts:

- Pack your lunch — homemade soups, sandwiches, and salads can be more healthful because you control the ingredients
- Choose lunch restaurants at least 1/2 mile away and enjoy a walk to and from to add an extra 2,000 steps to your day
- Serve bottled water, fresh fruit, veggie trays, mini bagels, salads, and whole-grain sandwich breads as part of the food fare for meetings
- Include at least one or more healthy options — low-fat muffins, fresh fruit, smoothies, and water — at office celebrations
- Form a committee to add healthier foods in the cafeteria — such as adding whole grain tortilla wraps and a salad bar in place of high-fat recipes
- Ask your vending company to stock healthier options like protein bars and baked chips
- Keep foods away from your desk and eat them at planned times to avoid unmindful snacking

Activate strategies to “fit in” more movement while at work

- Store a pair of comfortable shoes at the office for walks around the building or outside during breaks
- Suggest giving your work stairwell a makeover — decorate the walls with motivating messages or photos, give it a fresh coat of paint, add air fresheners, and install brighter bulbs; pleasant surroundings promote more frequent use
- Walk to work or take public transportation and walk from your stop to increase daily steps
- Use the bathroom, water fountain, and coffee machine farthest from your desk
- Take short movement breaks — hand deliver documents to a coworker's desk
- Use your pedometer to map out 2,000-step walking routes throughout and around your work building
- Encourage colleagues to hold meetings while walking outside — fresh air boosts creativity and the extra steps will add up

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