



## Walking Wellness Program Steps Down Chronic Disease Risk

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# Fresh fruit in a vending machine? It exists!

“With full-time employees spending at least a third of their lives in the office, do they even have a chance to live healthfully? The answer is yes!” –Sean Kelly

# What to Do When Your Office is a Junk Food Maze?

By Sean Kelly

Once queried my friends to find out what their office snacking options were. I was astonished with the results. The majority reported that their offices brought in catered lunches loaded with potato chips and dessert trays. Then, there was the friend who worked at a law firm that supplied cabinets filled to the brim with full-sized candy bars, chip bags, cookies and more. With full-time employees spending at least a third of their lives in the office, do they even have a chance to live healthfully? The answer is yes. Some office spaces, like Google, are commendable for making it easy for their employees to make healthful choices, while other offices are less than helpful.

Even those of us who work in corporate wellness can find ourselves straying from wellness when we are pulling late hours and the leftover kitchen donuts call our names. Here are some of the best tips I have learned for choosing healthful snacks and meals during the workday:

### When choosing snacks at the office:

Choose a snack that has a rounded mix of protein, healthful fat and fiber to help you feel satisfied. Some options include: nuts, a fruit and nut bar or a piece of fruit with a tablespoon of nut butter. Choose snacks with ingredients you can pronounce as highly processed foods can cause you to feel anxious, foggy and hyperactive.

Disregard the front label of snack packages; that is where the product's marketing messages are. Instead, go straight for the nutrition facts and ingredients.

Remember that nutritional components such as fiber, protein and fat only tell a part of a product's story. Read the entire label (nutrition facts and ingredients list) to get the full story.

Use Smart phone apps to make informed decisions. The free app Fooducate allows consumers to scan barcodes of foods to find out how healthful they are. The Good Food Near You app, also free, helps you find the most healthful restaurant near you and browse its menu, with the ability to sort by calories, lowest fat and more.

## Snacks That Love You:

- Larabar's new "Alt Protein" bars are made with healthful pea protein and pack 10g protein in each bar!



- KIND Bar's "5g sugar & under" line is a great choice for snack bars as they're made with minimal ingredients and have less sugar than most other snack bars on the market. In addition, these bars pack a dose of healthful fat & protein from their nut content.

- Clif Bar's new line called "Kit's Organic" pack only wholesome fruit and nut ingredients.

- Peeled Snacks - nothing but dried fruit, these snacks are a healthful sweet treat.

- Svelte Protein Drinks are rich with complex carbs for sustained energy, fiber and organic soy protein.

- Unsweetened coconut water has electrolytes and more potassium than a banana.





Natural "micro markets" are the latest trend in office wellness programs, providing employees with the convenience of a natural foods store right within their office space.

**The latest trends in bringing healthful eating to the office:**

See if your company wellness program would consider bringing in healthy vending machines or a healthful self-serve micro-market placed seamlessly into your office space. Healthy vending machines vend healthful items, including fresh fruit and locally-sourced products. Employees can use key cards, credit cards and more. Healthy vending machines are free to office locations that meet minimum qualifications. Many machines are high-tech and even eco-friendly.

Healthy Micro-markets: Imagine a self-serve natural foods store integrated seamlessly into your office space -- that is a micro-market. Also free to offices that meet minimum qualifications, micro-markets are a great option

for larger office spaces that want to provide a breadth of healthful snack and meal options.

Fair-trade & organic coffee machines: There are now sleek vending machines that vend fair-trade and organic coffee, which is a great time- and money-saver for employees who leave the office for expensive store-bought coffee.

**When choosing meals:**

Ask yourself: "what's the foundation of this meal?" If it is a muffin, for example, you know just by looking at it and touching it that its foundation is flour, sugar and oil, so you may want to steer clear. Alternately, if the foundation seems healthful- like a salad - and it is just the add-ons that make it less nutritious - just be mindful about what you add on (or about what you should take off). The range

of calories and fat in your favorite items is crazy-like the 1490-calorie steak omelet at Ihop versus the 152-calorie "Low Fat Fitness" omelet from Mimi's Cafe. This just goes to show you that you can still eat things you like and still not ruin your efforts to live healthfully... as long as you are mindful about it (and do your research beforehand if you can!).

**About The Author**

Sean Kelly is the CEO, co-founder and nutrition activist behind HUMAN (<http://www.healthyvending.com>), an award-winning nutrition distribution company serving corporate locations across the nation with healthy vending machines, micro-markets and more

**Other Quick Tips:**

"Fast food" does not have to equal junk food: ditch fried items in favor of grilled or steamed items.

Instead of white flour items (like white rice or white pasta), opt for brown rice and/or whole grain/whole wheat.

Make fruits and/or vegetables your side order.

Limit foods with the following descriptors: rich, batter, breaded, butter, cream, crispy, decadent, anything with "fried" in the description, and scalloped. All of these descriptors translate to excess calories and fat.

Watch your portion size. In the 1950s, hamburger patties were 1.5 ounces, while today's burgers weigh in at around 8 ounces. You do not have to eat everything served to you and you can be proactive about portions by sharing a meal or choosing side dishes that are light, such as fresh vegetables.

Do not drink your meal. Opt for water or low-sugar beverages. Remember that 4g of sugar are equivalent to a teaspoon.

Plan your week. Sundays are great days to plan your meals and cook ahead of time. You can make a big batch of brown rice or steamed vegetables to bring to the office each day.

Be a mindful eater. Take time to taste your food and honor feelings of fullness.

At the end of the day, your workplace is a second home and how you eat and interact there plays a huge role (if not the biggest role) in your overall wellbeing. By learning how to sidestep the junk food, make informed decisions and improve your office wellness programs, your office can be the next trailblazer in the food revolution!

