

Title:

Healthful Dining At Your Desk

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Summary:

Breakfast at your desk should be convenient, tasty, nutritious and mess-free. A quick rule: Include whole grains, dairy and a fruit.

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Article Body:

Many of us eat more food at work than we do at home simply because working hours span mealtimes and snack times. We grab breakfast foods from home or pick up something to eat at our desk. Lunch comes from a brown bag, the cafeteria or a restaurant. For some, snacking helps break up the afternoon and boosts energy levels for the rest of the workday.

Breakfast at your desk should be convenient, tasty, nutritious and mess-free. A quick rule: Include whole grains, dairy and a fruit. One option is yogurt (dairy) topped with Whole Grain Total® (whole grain) and diced peaches (fruit). A muffin made with whole grain cereal, along with milk and a banana, is also satisfying and easy to eat.

Packing lunch takes little time and allows you to choose what you want to eat. "Peel and wash vegetables, rinse and spin lettuce, slice cheese and fill water bottles on Sunday for the entire week," says Dayle Hayes, R.D., a nutrition consultant and author in Billings, Mont. "Wrap single servings of luncheon meats in plastic wrap, label and freeze. In the morning, use the frozen meat for a sandwich. It should be defrosted by lunchtime." Hayes also suggests preparing a couple extra servings when you're making dinner so that you have lunch leftovers.

Food safety is essential to prevent spoilage. Pack breakfast and lunch with cold packs if a refrigerator is not available. Heat chili, soup and other hot foods until very hot; then pack in a clean, insulated container warmed with boiling water. Open only when ready to eat.

Snacks may be the most difficult, and resisting the lure of office goodies can

be a challenge. Hayes recommends stocking your desk with nutritious, nonperishable snacks. If you have been told to eat less sodium to help control your blood pressure, limit snack foods that are overly salty. Area grocery or health food stores may offer more lower-sodium choices.

Banana-Wheat Muffins

Streusel

1 tablespoon Gold Medal® all-purpose flour

1 tablespoon packed brown sugar

1 tablespoon butter or margarine, softened

1/3 cup slightly crushed Whole Grain Total® cereal

Muffins

3/4 cup mashed ripe bananas (about 2 medium)

1/2 cup milk

3 tablespoons packed brown sugar

3 tablespoons vegetable oil

1 egg

1 1/4 cups Gold Medal® all-purpose flour

2 1/4 teaspoons baking powder

1/4 teaspoon salt

1 1/4 cups slightly crushed Whole Grain Total® cereal

1. Heat oven to 400°F. Grease bottoms only of 12 regular-size muffin cups. Stir together streusel ingredients until crumbly; set aside.

2. In large bowl, stir together bananas, milk, 3 tablespoons brown sugar, oil and egg. Stir in 1 1/4 cups flour, baking powder and salt just until flour is moistened; stir in 1 1/4 cups slightly crushed cereal. Divide batter evenly among

muffin cups, filling each about 2/3 full. Sprinkle streusel evenly over batter in muffin cups.

3. Bake about 20 minutes or until golden brown.