

Healthy Eating at Conference

By Anna Slivinski, RD



Making healthy food choices can sometimes be a challenge while attending a conference. With a day filled with presentations, networking events and evening socials, it can sometimes be difficult to find the nutritious foods you need to fuel your body and mind. You need food and drink that will keep you energized and alert during the day and relaxed at night when you need to sleep. Here are some tips:

Breaks

- Skip the pastry, muffin and doughnut platters at coffee breaks.
- Choose fresh fruit or a whole grain bagel and light cream cheese.

Beverages

- Keep a water bottle by your side all day. Stay hydrated.
- Use milk in your coffee and tea instead of cream. After 6 cups, this adds up to over 300 calories saved!
- Drink water, clear tea, or coffee during presentations and exhibits instead of high-sugar, high-calorie or artificially sweetened soft drinks and fruit drinks.

- Limit your intake of high-calorie alcoholic beverages at the company-sponsored events at the end of the day. Watch out for drinks with high sugar additions such as fruity martinis and highballs with fruit juices or soft drinks. Choose drinks with club soda or on the rocks, or opt for a glass of dry wine.

Meals

- Choose sandwiches, wraps and salads with dressing on the side when ordering a meal.
- Keep it small. Portion size is key.
- You can't go wrong with ordering an extra side salad or dish of vegetables.
- Select simply prepared appetizers that provide lean fish and fresh fruit and veggies (e.g., sushi).
- Choose a simple green salad with a vinaigrette dressing or a tomato and bocconcini salad as a starter. Beware of the popular Caesar salad; no salad is higher in calories!
- For an entrée, consider grilled beef, chicken or vegetarian options without creamy sauces.
- Choose a baked potato and

sautéed vegetables to complete your meal.

- A wood-fired vegetarian pizza is another healthy option.

Dessert

- Dessert options can be tempting and a real downfall. Fresh berries with whipped cream (Yes, you can!) or even a fruit tart are acceptable. And the best part: you don't need to skip the chocolate! Take along dark chocolate and enjoy a small piece before turning in for the night, or start your day with a low-fat or skinny specialty coffee. "Cinnamon dolce" is my favourite! 🍷

Anna Slivinski is a member of the CAWC Board of Directors and Community Dietitian and Wound Nutrition Consultant in Vancouver, BC.

Resources

1. How to Eat Healthy While Traveling for Business, Lori Rice, USA Today, 2014.
2. Healthy Plate, Vancouver Coastal Health, February, 2014.
3. 10 Tips for Eating Out, EatRightOntario, Dietitians of Canada, 2014.
4. Health Check Program, Eating Out, Heart and Stroke Foundation, 2010.