

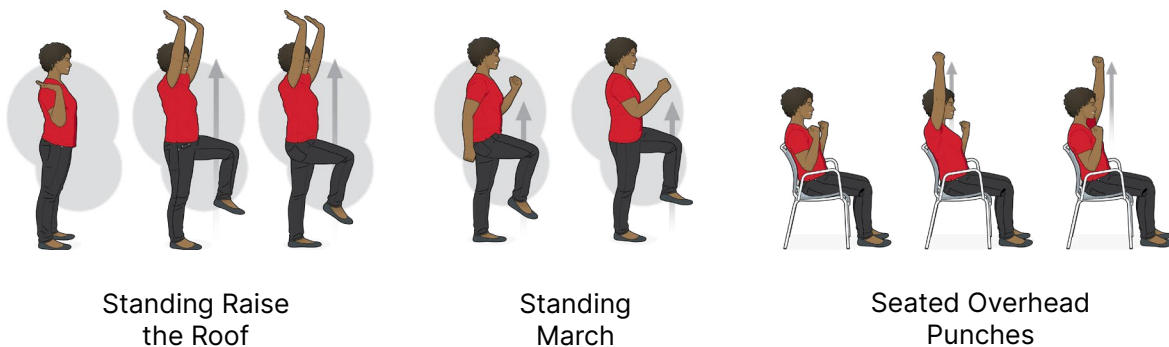
Smart Choices for Healthy Meetings

Making meetings **HEALTHY** begins with planning ahead of time whether virtual, remote call in, in-person, time limited, full, or multi-days in length. By making healthy choices the easy choices, leaders, managers, and organizations can create impactful and productive meetings while fostering a culture of wellbeing.

There are only so many hours in a workday, which is why it's important to ensure time is well spent in meetings. A **HEALTHY** foundational approach can ensure meetings are effective, inspire productivity, and help achieve goals and objectives:

- **Host:** As host of meetings, make sure they are well organized and effective from inception through execution. This makes the best use of attendees' time.
- **Ensure:** The meeting should be productive and stay on task and target. Focus on ensuring conversations are on point and engaging and that next steps are clear and aligned for every one. Establish ground rules ahead of time and remind attendees at the start to be respectful of the person talking, avoid interruptions, and to not talk over each other. Address personal electronic device usage guidelines.
- **Agenda:** Prepare and send an agenda ahead of time and adhere to the content, context, and action items within.
- **Leave:** Attendees leaving the meeting should come away with clarity regarding decisions, follow-ups, and deliverables with a timeline in place and established ownership.
- **Time:** Make sure meetings start on time. Begin with a brief timed ice breaker activity for attendees to connect. Consider 25- or 50-minute meetings, leaving a buffer at the end. For day-long meetings, consider building in breaks every 90 minutes. Equally important is ending the meeting on time.
- **Hear:** What are attendees are saying? Really listen to their ideas, concerns, and suggestions. Have an open mind toward collaboration for the best outcomes and give everyone opportunities to contribute.
- **Y:** What is the "why" of the meeting? Take a few moments to cover the meeting's overarching purpose as it relates to the organizational mission and vision and to its goals and objectives.

Choose-to-Move Activities: Incorporate physical activity breaks (stretch break, gentle physical activity fitness intermission, etc.) by having attendees get up from their seats after prolonged periods of sitting and inactivity. Build in physical activity throughout meetings (ensuring everyone is safe and movements are modified for attendee limitations) such as getting up to form sub-groups. Taking a short walk after eating (even 5–10 minutes) can help people feel energized as well as positively impact blood glucose (blood sugar) levels. Consider walking, stand-up, or outdoor meetings.



Breathing-Breaks and Stress-Break Activities: Stress impacts blood glucose and energy levels, which impacts concentration. Weave in relaxation activities or some type of breathwork (this is also an effective way to start meetings), including:

- Box breathing: Simple breathing exercises (breathe in to a count of four, hold for a count of four, exhale for a count of four, and hold for a count of four).
- 4, 7, 8 breathing: Breathe in through the nose for a count of four, hold for a count of seven, exhale slowly through the mouth for a count of eight.
- Mini vacation: With eyes closed, visualize a favorite place, vacation spot, or calming location for one minute, imagining sights, smells, and sounds.

Break the Ice: Incorporate icebreakers (especially if you have full-day or multiple-day meetings). Invite attendees to share their gifts, interests, or attributes. For example: What is your superpower? What is your hidden talent? What is something most people do not know about you? Sharing activities builds connections and strengthens teams.

Choose Healthy Snacks, Meals, and Beverages: Incorporating healthy snacks, meals, and beverages at meetings is an important way to nourish and educate attendees. Ask ahead of time for any dietary or health-related restrictions or preferences. Well balanced snacks and meals help to stabilize blood glucose levels.

Diabetes Plate: The Diabetes Plate is an easy framework providing nutritious and balanced meals. This approach ensures meals offered are diabetes-friendly, nutritionally balanced, and provide an educational opportunity.

Building the Diabetes Plate:

- **Non-starchy vegetables:** Fill half of a nine inch plate with non-starchy vegetables such as broccoli, leafy greens, carrots, cabbage, green beans, etc.
- **Lean protein:** Fill one quarter of the plate with lean animal or plant-based protein offerings such as poultry, fish, eggs, low fat cheese, legumes, tofu, nut butter, nuts, or seeds.
- **Quality Carbohydrates:** Fill the remaining one quarter of the plate from a selection of complex carbohydrates such as whole grains, brown rice, starchy vegetables, which contain fiber.
- **Beverages:** Limit calorie-containing beverages and offer water and zero-calorie beverages to hydrate avoiding high sugar beverages which cause rapid spikes in blood glucose levels.
- **Overall Positive Nutrition:** Foods with positive nutrition value are those that minimize excess sugars, sodium, and/or saturated fats while providing essential nutrients like fiber, vitamins, minerals, along with healthy fats.



SNACKS: When snacks are offered, consider a balanced approach with a quality carbohydrate source plus lean protein and/or healthy fat options. For example, pre-packaged or catered snacks could be peanut butter and whole grain crackers, nut and dried fruit trail mix, mini protein bars, cheese and whole grain crackers, vegetables and hummus, or fruit and nut-butter dips.

Consider including nutrition labeling and signage stating food content, allergens, and portion size along with grams of carbohydrate per serving.

For more meal planning and recipe ideas, visit Diabetes Food Hub® at diabetesfoodhub.org.