



Finnish Institute of  
Occupational Health

# Nutrition

OFF WE GO! HEALTH AT WORKPLACES - LIST OF TIPS

## Food as a source of energy for work and recovery

**When you eat regularly and healthily, both your brain and your muscles get enough energy for doing your work and recovering from work.**

Your alertness remains stable when you eat at sensible intervals. Fibre-rich food keeps your blood sugar level even. You can use the plate model in all your meals, even packed lunches.

*A health promotion plan can help you find suitable ways together to promote healthy meals during working hours.*

**TIPS FOR WORKPLACES:** Which of the following are already in use at your workplace? What next?

- Meal options are discussed during induction training and performance appraisals.
- My workplace has a pleasant break room where we can eat.
- The break room has a water supply, a refrigerator and a microwave, as well as dishes for us to use for eating during working hours and to enable us to store our food.
- At my workplace, we have agreed on coffee and food break times. The breaks are in our diaries, so that everyone has time to eat, and we can eat together.
- During food breaks we talk about things other than work, which allows us to detach from work for a while.
- We have good refreshments during meetings.
- We sometimes cook together and exchange good packed lunch and meal recipes.
- We have free materials available for use at our workplace (for example, Heart Symbol materials, <https://www.sydanmerkki.fi/en/>), which motivate us to pay attention to healthy nutrition.
- Our employer sponsors our meals during working hours.
- The canteen or place at which we eat regularly has clearly marked the meals' nutritional values.
- The canteen or place at which we eat also has healthy meal and snack options. If needed, we give feedback and make requests concerning presentation and the options available.
- We encourage each other to eat during working hours.
- Occupational health services regularly arrange both individual and group coaching on healthy eating and weight loss.

# Eating healthy food regularly

## The brain and muscles need fuel for working and recovering from work.

The busier you are, the more important it is to remember to eat regularly. The plate model helps you put together a healthy meal. In physically strenuous work, it is important that you eat enough, and you may need snacks more often. When you eat sensibly at work you have energy left for leisure time.

Occupational health services can help you recover from work and make lifestyle changes

You can learn more about nutritional guidelines for working-aged people at <https://www.evira.fi/elintarvikkeet/terveytta-edistava-ruokavalio/ravitsemussuosittukset/aikuiset/>



## HOW DO YOU EAT DURING WORKING HOURS? What do you already do? What next?

- I eat at regular intervals.
- My meals always follow the plate model when possible.
- I monitor my alertness during the day. I don't skip meals and I don't eat heavy meals. If I feel worn out at the end of the working day, I try to think why. Keeping a diary or taking photos of what eat might help me in this.
- I plan my packed lunches for a week at a time, for example. Planning also makes food shopping easier.
- I pack my food in plenty of time so that I don't forget it if I'm in a hurry. If needed, I buy a healthy ready-made meal from the shop.
- When I'm thirsty I drink water. I drink water regularly throughout the day.
- I keep fruit, nuts and yoghurt at the workplace as snacks. I often take snacks to work to last for a few days.
- When my work involves travel, I plan where I can eat. I also make sure I have extra snacks in the car just in case, so that I don't have to go without when something unexpected happens.
- I follow the plate model, even with packed lunches. I vary my packed lunches by alternating between home-cooked meals, salads, soups, porridge or sandwiches on different days.
- I have set myself a goal for eating during working hours. I aim to eat at work every day. Each meal contains berries, fruit or vegetables. I also pay attention to my salt intake.
- In addition to vegetables, all my meals contain low fat dairy products and fibre-rich cereal products. I put low-fat spread on my bread.
- Occupational health services can help you recover from work and make lifestyle changes.

Picture: Finnish Food Safety Authority