

# **Guidelines for Healthy Fellowship Food in Faith Communities**

Offer healthy options: While not every item you serve needs to be “healthy,” try to provide healthy choices as often as possible. Provide more nutrient-dense foods (foods with more nutrition and vitamins) and less “empty” calories (foods high in calories and fat but low in nutrients and vitamins). Variety is the spice of life!

Fruits and vegetables: Make sure to include as many fruits and vegetables as possible. Remember ALL fruits and veggies count including fresh, frozen, canned and dried. Try including fruits and vegetables in baked goods and casseroles. You can also offer plates of raw veggies, bowls of canned fruits or trail mix with nuts and dried fruit.

Grains, Breads, baked goods: Try to offer whole grain breads and crackers instead of highly processed white flour breads and crackers. Grocery store muffins and sweet rolls are usually very high in fats and sugars. Whole grain breads and crackers and homemade muffins are generally better. Rice crackers, whole wheat bagels or English muffins and corn tortillas are excellent healthy choices.

Healthy protein: Meats and cheeses can be expensive as well as high in fat. Some good choices include: sliced turkey, chicken and ham, nuts, and low fat cheeses such as mozzarella and reduced fat cream cheese. Other good protein sources are nuts, sunflower seeds, peanut butter, eggs, tofu, and soybeans.

Beverages: Try to provide water, low fat milk and juice as often as possible instead of sugary drinks. Some ideas to try: water with lemon and/or orange slices in a pitcher, iced herbal teas such as hibiscus, mint or berry sweetened with a little honey.

## **Some “healthy fellowship” example menus:**

Example #1: Whole wheat bagels with reduced fat cream cheese, sliced fresh fruit, carrot and celery sticks with peanut butter, milk and juice.

Example #2: Egg casserole (made with spinach, reduced fat cheese and turkey ham), fruit salad, iced herbal tea.

Example #3: Whole grain bread, sliced turkey and cheese, sliced veggie tray (carrots, celery, cucumbers, red peppers, etc.), hummus, sliced fruit, water w/lemon and orange slices.

Example #4: Bean dip, corn tortilla chips, green salad (or other raw veggie salad such as cole slaw), fruit smoothies (made with frozen berries, bananas, apple juice and/or rice milk).

## Healthy Fellowship Food Choices

<b>Food Groups</b>	<b>Less Healthy Options</b>	<b>More Healthy Options &amp; Ideas</b>
<i>Grains (breads, baked goods, cereals)</i>	Bakery muffins Cakes Pies Sweet rolls White Flour tortillas Cookies	Bagels Whole wheat bread or muffins Whole grain crackers Rice or rice crackers Corn or whole wheat tortillas Granola
<i>Fruits</i>	All forms of fruit are healthy!*	Sliced fresh fruit Dried fruit in trail mix or muffins Fruit salad Frozen berries made into smoothies Fruit kebabs
<i>Vegetables</i>	All forms of veggies are healthy!	Sliced fresh veggies (carrots, celery, cucumbers, bell peppers, or pea pods) Lightly steamed veggies (green beans, broccoli, cauliflower) Salsa Soups Salads
<i>Proteins (meat, eggs, beans, nuts)</i>	Fried Chicken Beans made with lard Bacon Sausage Eggs made with lots of mayonnaise or cheese	Beans (in dips, salads or salsas) Beans & rice (with little added fat) Turkey or Chicken (baked) Sliced deli turkey or ham Peanut butter Tofu (baked or scrambled) Nuts & seeds in trail mix Tuna or egg salad (with light mayo) Hummus
<i>Dairy</i>	Whole milk Whipped cream Butter	1% or nonfat milk Low fat yogurt & cheese Reduced fat cream cheese Pudding (made with low fat milk)
<i>Beverages</i>	Fruit punch (or other drinks with little or no actual fruit juice) Soda Energy drinks	Water Low fat milk Iced tea 100% juice

\*Try to avoid “fruit-flavored” items that contain little fruit but lots of sugar and fat.

**This document contains some ideas. Your personal creations and recipes are welcome and appreciated. Thank you for your time and efforts to support the well-being of our congregation!**

*Prepared by the Wellness Task Force of Ainsworth United Church of Christ, Portland, OR - March 2010*