



Healthy Employees, Quality Employees

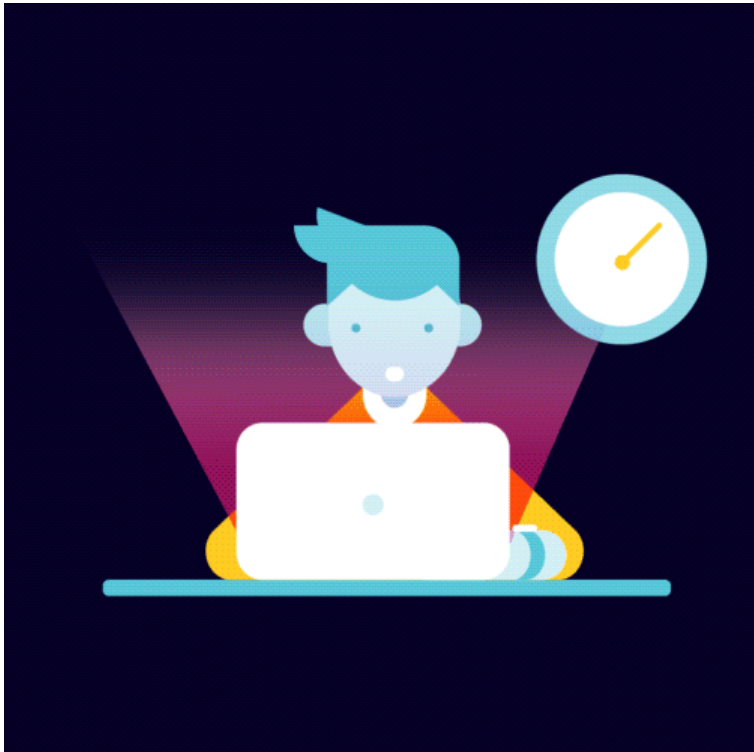
NINETTE WARNER

Overview

- ▶ Preventable Diseases and How to Prevent Them
- ▶ The Role of a Registered Dietitian
- ▶ Workplace Wellness Programs
- ▶ Suggestions for Creating a Healthier Workplace



Healthy Workforce



- ▶ People spend most of their waking lives at work
- ▶ A healthy work environment is conducive to healthy employees
- ▶ Quality work- products and services- is dependent on quality employees
- ▶ US employees spend \$36.4 billion/year on employee absenteeism

Preventable Diseases



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- ▶ According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
 - ▶ 70% of annual deaths are due to chronic disease
 - ▶ Most of these diseases are preventable
- ▶ Cardiovascular disease- #1 cause of death since 1900 (except in 1918)
 - ▶ Coronary heart disease, hypertension, heart failure, & stroke

Preventable Diseases

▶ Type 2 Diabetes

- ▶ Can begin 7 years before diagnosis, some go up to 12 years without a diagnosis
- ▶ 1 in 3 people have prediabetes
- ▶ 90% of these people do not know

▶ High blood pressure

- ▶ 33% of the population
- ▶ 50% of these people do not know
- ▶ “silent killer”



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Healthy Diet

- ▶ There is no single healthy diet
- ▶ Focus on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, lean protein, healthy fats
- ▶ Variety
- ▶ Mediterranean diet
- ▶ Skip the fad diets
- ▶ Everything in moderation, including moderation 😊



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Fats, Oils & Sweets
USE SPARINGLY

**Milk, Yogurt &
Cheese Group**
2-3 SERVINGS

Vegetable Group
3-5 SERVINGS

**Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans,
Eggs & Nuts Group**
2-3 SERVINGS

Fruit Group
2-4 SERVINGS

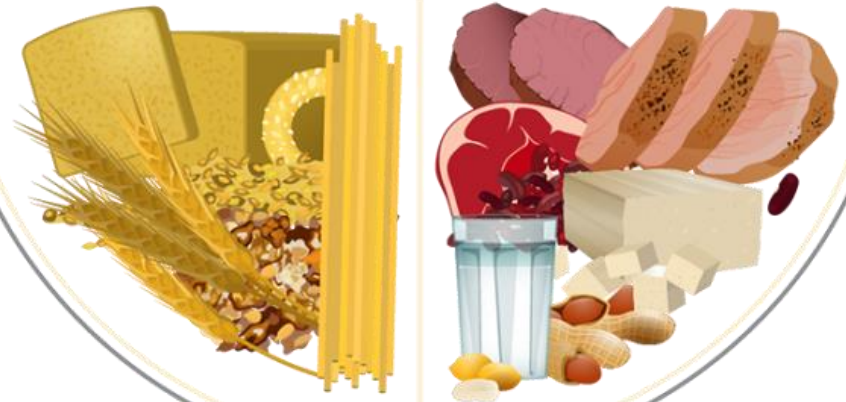
**Bread, Cereal,
Rice & Pasta
Group**
**6-11
SERVINGS**

KEY

■ Fat (naturally occurring and added)

■ Sugars (added)

These symbols show fats and added sugars in foods.



Exercise!



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- ▶ Physical inactivity is the new smoking
- ▶ 150 minutes/week of moderate intensity or
- ▶ 75 minutes/week of vigorous intensity aerobic exercise
- ▶ Muscle strength training at least 2 days/week

Sugar

- ▶ “Empty” calories
- ▶ USDA recommends no more than 10% of calories from sugar/day
 - ▶ ~12 teaspoons
- ▶ American Heart Association
 - ▶ ~6 teaspoons for women & children over 2 years
 - ▶ ~9 teaspoons for men



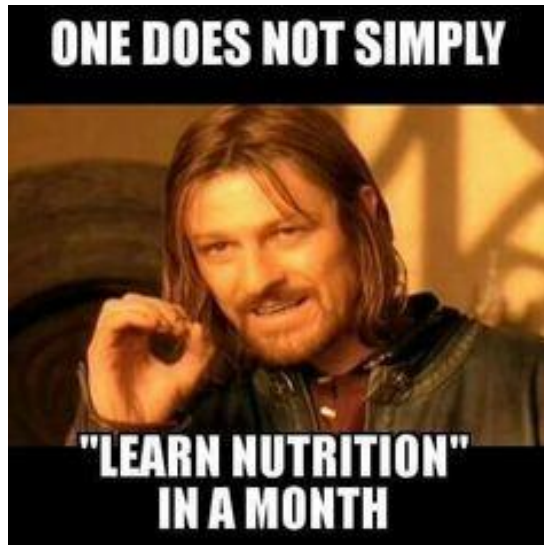
Registered Dietitian

- ▶ Food and nutrition EXPERT
- ▶ 5 years of school
 - ▶ Courses in food & nutrition sciences, foodservice management, nutritional counseling, general chemistry, biochemistry, organic chemistry, microbiology, nutrient metabolism and more!
- ▶ 6-12 month supervised internship
- ▶ Pass national exam
- ▶ Continuing education credits



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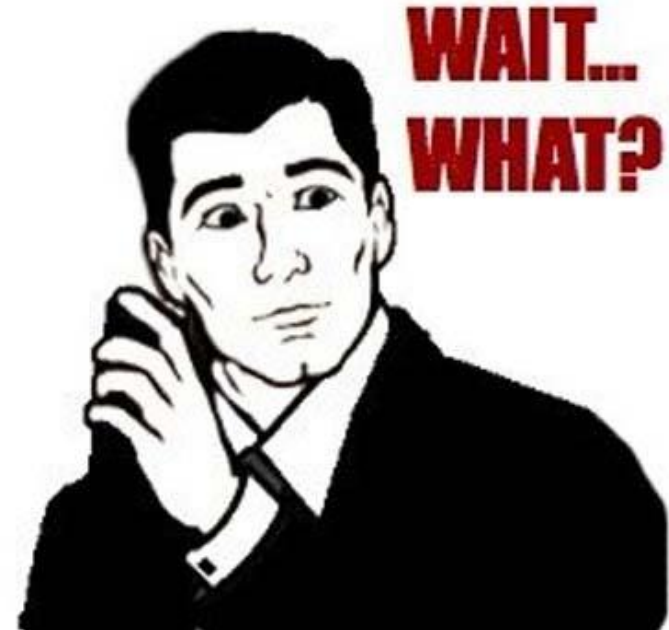
Nutritionists



- ▶ No legal definition
- ▶ Anyone can call themselves a nutritionist
 - ▶ Some do have formal education/training
- ▶ Cannot provide medical nutrition therapy

Where else people get their nutrition advice

- ▶ Physicians
 - ▶ have 20 hours of nutrition education (on average)
 - ▶ That's less than one course
- ▶ The internet/ “abfluencers”
 - ▶ Promotes fad diets
 - ▶ Dangerous “yo-yo” dieting
- ▶ Friends/Family
 - ▶ “This worked for me...”



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Workplace Wellness Programs

- ▶ Medical costs have skyrocketed
- ▶ Policy makers, insurers, & employers seek new ways to reduce healthcare costs
- ▶ Wellness programs- preventative care that discourages inactivity, smoking, & other unhealthy behaviors
- ▶ Affordable Care Act- allows employers to offer up to 30% of health insurance coverage as incentive to join programs



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Workplace Wellness Programs



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- ▶ 6-billion-dollar industry
- ▶ Claim numerous benefits
 - ▶ Reduce medical spending
 - ▶ Return on investment of up to \$4 saved for every dollar spent
 - ▶ Inspire behavior change
 - ▶ Healthier, happier employees
 - ▶ More productive employees
 - ▶ Greater job satisfaction

Benefits of employee wellness programs



Evidence?

- ▶ A lot of anecdotal and observational study evidence
- ▶ High quality studies do not show proof of benefits



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“What do Workplace Wellness Programs do? Evidence from the Illinois Workplace Wellness Study”

- ▶ Implemented comprehensive wellness program for ~5,000 employees
- ▶ 2-year random control trial
- ▶ Looked at 42 outcomes
 - ▶ Medical utilization (pharmaceuticals, hospital, doctor visits)
 - ▶ Laboratory values (blood glucose, blood pressure, cholesterol)
 - ▶ Productivity (sick leave, promotion, hours worked, job satisfaction)
 - ▶ Health behaviors- gym visitation
- ▶ Participants were more likely to have visited campus gym and annually spent an average of \$1,384 less than nonparticipants on medical needs *before the study*

“What do Workplace Wellness Programs do? Evidence from the Illinois Workplace Wellness Study”

- ▶ 2 positive results
 - ▶ Participants reported they were more likely to receive a health screening compared to control group
 - ▶ Participants more likely to report that management prioritizes worker health and safety compared to control group



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Discrimination

- ▶ Alabama state employers with BMIs above 35 had to pay \$25 more per month than those with a BMI lower than 35
 - ▶ They have since changed to a “discount” structure
 - ▶ Employees get \$25 discount if they join wellness program
- ▶ In other programs, those who do not participate have higher premiums, deductibles and out-of-pocket expenses



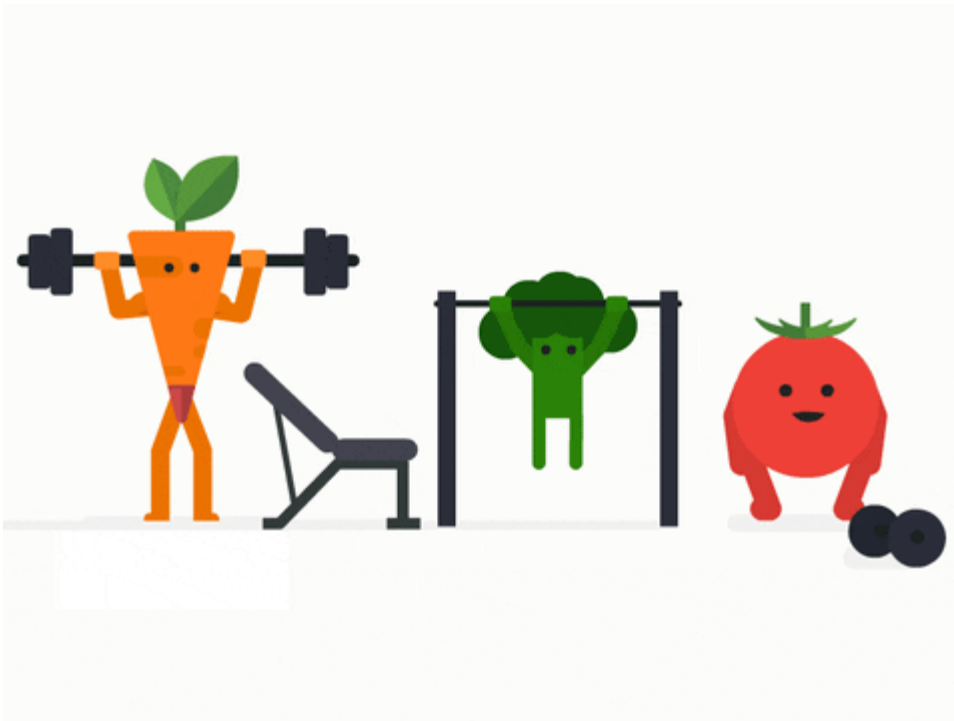
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Healthier Eating

- ▶ Provide free fruit for snacks
- ▶ Develop healthy food & drink policy for catered lunches
- ▶ Ensure healthier options in vending machines
- ▶ Invite a registered dietitian in to give cooking demo or healthy eating lesson



Encourage More Physical Activity



- ▶ Provide step trackers- Fitbit, Garmin, etc.
- ▶ Encourage walking meetings
- ▶ Have fitness/yoga instructor run sessions before/after work
- ▶ Reimburse gym memberships
- ▶ Create employee sports team

Mental Health

- ▶ Create meditation/prayer/relaxation room
- ▶ Invite professional in to give stress reduction techniques
- ▶ Create a no “backbiting” policy
- ▶ Have strategies to combat bullying
- ▶ Teach positive communication techniques



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Avoid long sitting time



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- ▶ Encourage regular (scheduled) breaks
- ▶ Encourage stand up/walking meetings
- ▶ Standing desks
- ▶ Invite an expert in to go over workplace ergonomics

Miscellaneous

- ▶ Health fairs with annual health screenings
- ▶ On site free flu vaccinations
- ▶ Create smoke free work zone policy
- ▶ Subsidize smoking cessation programs



Take Away

- ▶ Employees are your greatest asset
- ▶ In order to have quality products and services, employees need to be their healthiest
- ▶ Have current workplace wellness programs evaluated for effectiveness
- ▶ Implement simple, low cost methods to increase health



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