

# 100-plus ideas for Total Worker Health®

*Total Worker Health®* strategies address the work environment, management systems, and workplace climate or culture, as well as demonstrate concern for a worker's health, safety, and overall well-being. Here are some actions you can take right now to help nudge your organization toward *Total Worker Health®*.

## Healthy eating

### Environment:

- Create an employee/community garden onsite or partner with a local school.
- Provide healthy options in vending machines and services.
- Repurpose coffee fund to buy fresh fruit.
- Schedule staff meetings on the same day as a nearby farmers market to allow easy access for employees, or invite a farmers market onsite.
- Provide unsalted nuts in dispensers instead of candy in bowls.
- Provide microwave, refrigerator, sink, and cooking area for employees.
- Provide coolers or other refrigeration for field workers' meals from home.
- Provide lactation rooms for nursing mothers.
- Discard unrefrigerated perishable food after two hours.
- Use a dishwasher to clean dishes if feasible.
- Provide handwashing facilities or waterless hand cleaner near eating areas.
- Keep knives sharp, in good condition, and stored safely.

### Management systems and policy:

- Purchase healthy foods (reduced calories,

sodium, and fat) for on-site cafeteria and food venues.

- Subsidize healthy cafeteria options so they are affordable for all.
- Offer healthy options such as vegetables and fruit at meetings and events.
- Prohibit on-site marketing of processed, sugary foods and beverages.
- Discourage bringing sweets left over from events to share at work.
- If snacks are routine, designate a snack area away from work areas.
- Use contests to prevent holiday weight gain.
- Refrigerate leftover perishable food promptly.

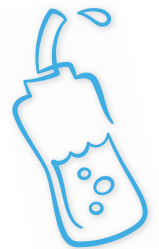
### Individual:

- Learn about healthy food at [choosemyplate.gov](http://choosemyplate.gov) and [oldwayspt.org/](http://oldwayspt.org/).
- Host cooking lessons or an employee cook-off for healthy, easy-to-prepare recipes.
- Invite a nutritionist for lunch-n-learns; record for those unable to attend.
- Buy a corporate subscription to a health and safety publication; share articles.

## Healthy hydration

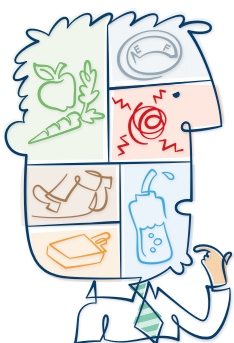
### Environment:

- Install a fast-fill water station.
- Increase hydrating drink choices (water, flavored/infused water, herbal tea) and limit caffeinated and sugary drinks in vending machines.
- Offer snacks such as fruits and vegetables that have high water content.



## Resources

For more information, including guides on other workplace health and safety topics, visit [saif.com/twh](http://saif.com/twh).



Signs that inactivity may be an issue at your workplace:

Sitting during most of the work day

Often eating lunch at desks and skipping breaks

Working long shifts

Workstations are not ergonomically adjusted



- Provide water instead of sodas at meetings and employer-sponsored events.
- Provide access to clean toilet facilities to encourage hydration.
- Provide clean, cool drinking water at no cost.
- Provide closed drink containers so employees can hydrate at their workstations.

#### Management systems and policy:

- Subsidize hydrating drinks and snacks.
- Allow for flexible schedules to encourage water consumption and restroom breaks.
- Repurpose corporate coffee fund to support healthy hydration options.
- Use toolbox talks, fact sheets, and posters to reinforce healthy hydration.
- Create a hydration challenge or use an app to have employees track their daily water intake. Reward employees who participate.
- Model healthy eating and hydration at all levels.

#### Individual:

- Keep a hydration diary or use a hydration app to track healthy fluid intake.
- Pledge to drink at least 64 ounces of water a day.
- Replace at least one soda or caffeinated drink a day with water.
- Monitor the color of your urine.
- Keep a container of fresh water at your workstation and in your car.
- Learn about the health benefits of hydration strategies.

### Healthy Exercise

#### Environment:

- Place copiers/printers further away from workstations.
- Install bicycle stands/shelters.
- Promote stairwell use by improving lighting and stair edge contrast, and posting motivational signs.
- Designate a nearby walking path that is safe, well-lit, and well-maintained.
  - Provide ergonomic tools appropriate to the task.
  - Provide access to an on-site fitness center, gymnasium, or physical activity classes, including locker room and showers.

- Expose employees to a different activity each month or quarter, such as yoga or Zumba.
- Create opportunities to change position throughout the day, including sit-to-stand workstations and task rotation.
- Provide on-site recreation such as Wii, pingpong, bocce ball, or croquet for employees to enjoy on breaks.

#### Management systems and policy:

- Encourage walking meetings.
- Model safe and healthy exercise at all levels of management.
- Provide functional fitness screening and coaching for physically demanding jobs.
- Provide flexible work schedules to support movement throughout the day.
- Provide reflective vests for walkers and bicyclists.
- Provide walking poles.
- Use vouchers as incentives for employees to purchase good walking shoes.
- Partner with parks and recreation programs to create active opportunities.
- Provide incentives for physical activity, including wearable technology and subsidized gym memberships.
- Implement team challenges for taking steps/using wearable tracking technology and apps.
- Promote a culture that supports recreational activity on breaks.
- Encourage non-motorized commutes.

#### Individual:

- Participate in team movement challenges.
- Use wearable tracking technology and apps.
- Create teams for biking, running, walking, kayaking, or other sports.
- Participate in recreational opportunities such as Wii, pingpong, bocce ball, or croquet on breaks.
- Change position throughout the day.
- Share favorite hiking location (online with photos or on a bulletin board).
- Invite others to walk on break.
- Follow pedestrian and bicycle safety rules.
- Wear high-visibility gear when walking and bicycling.



Signs that fatigue may be an issue at your workplace:

Physically or mentally strenuous work

Long shifts, long work weeks, late night or early morning hours

Quick shift returns: less than 12 hours off between shifts

Long commutes

Physical symptoms, such as yawning or tired eyes

Frequent errors

Heavy caffeine consumption

Noisy workplace, inadequate lighting

Conflict between work and home responsibilities

High level of absenteeism

- Engage in fitness training to promote muscle symmetry, mobility, control, and balance.
- Walk, bike, or take public transportation to work.

## Fatigue

### Environment:

- Identify and control tripping hazards, especially clutter and cords in walkways.
- Provide security controls to prevent crime and violence.
- Improve lighting; optimize for night workers.
- Provide additional safeguards for shift workers who exercise, such as handholds on treadmills and walking in pairs.
- Provide a safe place for brief nap on break.
- Maintain temperature at the low end of comfort zone for night shift, typically 60.8 to 65.4 degrees if strenuous, or around 68 degrees for sedentary environments.
- Maintain humidity at the low end of comfort zone.
- Assess background noise or music for volume and worker impact, and adjust as needed.

### Management systems and policy:

- Identify work practices that contribute to fatigue and collaborate on controls.
- Rotate shifts forward not backward (days, evenings, nights).
- Make work-related travel part of the work day.
- Implement organizational stress management program to improve sleep quality.
- Initiate flexible schedules or other opportunities for employees to have autonomy in their work.
- Allow napping on breaks in a safe place for 30 minutes or less.
- Model healthy sleep hygiene and fatigue self-monitoring and management at all levels, including pulling over when too tired to drive.
- Train and provide support for stress management, good nutrition, exercise, sleep hygiene, and fatigue management for supervisors and employees.

### Individual:

- Participate in training on improved sleep hygiene and fatigue self-management; apply skills.
- Develop effective stress management skills.
- Learn about the impact of nutrition and exercise on sleep.

- Take naps when needed, especially when sleepy while driving.
- Report fatigue that may impact safe completion of a task.
- Use the buddy system for safety sensitive tasks to monitor for sleepiness and fatigue.
- Self-monitor for sleepiness and fatigue.

## Stress

### Environment:

- Establish a quiet room, walking path, or other areas for meeting and contemplation.
- Provide a safe work environment with well-controlled hazards and good lighting.
- Provide easy access to appropriate protective equipment.
- Maintain a clean environment; remove clutter.
- Contract with a vendor for employee-paid chair massage on break.
- Invite laughter; schedule a comedian for company events.
- Involve family, partner, and/or friends to participate in activities.
- Provide meditation recordings for relaxation.

### Management systems and policy:

- Support work-life balance; offer flexible scheduling, telecommuting, and amenities such as dry cleaning pick-up or on-site car wash when feasible.
- Offer tuition reimbursement for classes (ESL training, personal growth, or nutrition education) or pay for volunteering.
- Allow music and casual Fridays as rewards.
- Perform an organizational stress assessment.
- Support time away from work area.
- Conduct stress recognition training for managers and supervisors.
- Support team building and recognition, such as weekly fun awards.
- Schedule sessions on managing time, finances, and stress.
- Encourage electronically disconnecting after hours.





Signs that tobacco may be an issue at your workplace:

Designated smoking areas

Employees smoking in vehicles

People smoking together during breaks

Construction or hospitality fields, which often have more smokers

### Individual:

- Schedule time in your day to regroup and decompress by spending time outside, doing yoga, reading a good book, sitting, etc.
- Take a life management class, such as goal setting, time management, or financial planning; apply skills.
- Set healthy goals on exercise, nutrition, sleep/rest.
- Take tai chi, yoga, or qigong classes.

### Nicotine

#### Environment:

- Implement a nicotine-free campus policy in collaboration with safety to help assure that employees who choose to continue to smoke will have a safe place to do so.
- Prohibit on-site tobacco and nicotine vending and advertising.

#### Management systems and policy:

- Promote a nicotine-free campus.
- Include e-cigarettes and chew in nicotine-free policy.
- Promote cessation (health benefits, pay for support and quit products for multiple quit attempts).
- Provide education (training, lunch and learns, newsletter).

### Individual:

- Participate in health risk appraisal.
- Participate in educational/cessation programs.
- Use the buddy system.

### Sustainability

#### Environment:

- Conduct a regular environmental assessment to assure workspaces and job tasks are safe and healthful and do not degrade overall well-being.
- Provide sit-to-stand workstations, anti-fatigue mats, and other ergonomic controls to reduce musculoskeletal injury risk.

#### Management systems and policy:

- Begin each meeting with a safety or well-being topic for work or home. (For topics, try Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Home and Recreational Safety, National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety, and National Safety Council.)

- Invite a wellness committee member to sit on the safety committee and vice versa, or combine the two committees.
- Contact your health plan or search online for tools to start or refresh your wellness efforts. (Try Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's National Healthy Worksite Program and Kaiser Permanente's Workforce Health Resources.)
- Contact your workers' compensation safety professional or search online to start or refresh your safety effort. (Try saif.com, Oregon Institute for Occupational Health Sciences, National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.)
- Find additional tips on integrating injury prevention and health improvement at NIOSH *Total Worker Health*®.
- Allow employees to borrow personal protective equipment for home projects; provide wellness rewards for employees who use PPE at home and teach their loved ones.
- Provide an employee assistance program and remind staff they can use it for confidential counseling during stressful times or to improve communication at home or at work.
- Partner with your health insurance provider to provide health risk assessments with coaching. Consider incentives as allowed under the Affordable Care Act.
- Provide a space for positive employee interaction.
- Have consistent messages and budget for improving health and safety at work, home, and leisure.
- Participate in community awareness campaigns to address health and safety risks.
- Assess all work activities to determine hazards to well-being and safety, and ensure protective measures are in place.
- Advocate for teams to help others stay aware of their own health and safety at work and at home. Healthy and safe behaviors are contagious.
- Avoid contest and competition fatigue; don't overdo challenges.