

Planning an Employee Health Fair

A. Why a health fair?

A health fair is a great way for you to offer your employees information and activities that help to educate them and offer suggestions for healthier living through a variety of health topics. Health fairs can also offer valuable health screenings to detect health issues early, before they become serious.

B. Where to begin

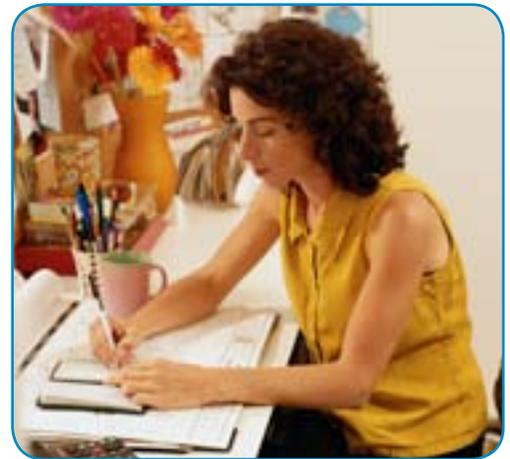
Proper planning is the most important element to ensure success. Optimally, planning for a health fair should begin a year to six months before the target date. Start by developing a budget for costs such as vendor fees, parking fees, decorations, food/beverages, employee incentives, materials, etc. Choose a location that is convenient for your employees and vendors. Make sure there is adequate and comfortable space to allow for setup of any equipment being used during the fair.

Be creative! Choose a theme for your health fair that fits your company, or plan a health fair in conjunction with a monthly health observance. For a listing of the monthly health observances, go to www.ibx.com/worksite_wellness and click on *Employer Tools*.

C. How to promote the event

Think about how messages and memos are normally communicated in your organization. Start with a method of communication that typically works well. Promote the event at least four weeks in advance. Here are some promotion ideas:

- company intranet
- email messages
- company newsletter
- paycheck stuffers
- banners
- word of mouth
- company meetings
- flyers on everyone's desk the morning of the event
- flyers that offer incentives to participate in the event
- posters displayed in cafeteria, restrooms, building lobby, copy room, elevators



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D. Choosing vendors

Choose vendors who can offer your employees the greatest benefits. Vendors should all have a positive health mission. Some ideas include:

- Independence Blue Cross
- American Heart Association
- American Cancer Society
- American Lung Association
- American Diabetes Association
- American Red Cross
- area health club
- county health department
- local fire, police, hospital, home health agency
- weight management program representative
- dietitian/nutrition expert
- car seat checks
- dental health organization



E. Consider screenings

Screenings help build awareness of health risks and provide information on how individuals can make changes in their lifestyle to enhance their health. Most screenings take several minutes, so allow extra time for participants to attend these booths, or allow participants to pre-register for a specific time for screenings. Suggestions for screenings include:

- blood pressure
- visual acuity
- DermaScan skin analysis
- body composition
- hearing
- total cholesterol
- diabetes risk assessment



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F. Demonstrations and activities

Add fun and interest to your health fair by offering demonstrations and activities. Some ideas include:

- chair massage
- CPR
- yoga
- healthy cooking
- first aid
- proper lifting
- exercise equipment demonstration



G. Incentives/raffle items

Incentives and raffle items are a great way to help build participation and motivation. Consider items that are health-related and/or support the theme of your health fair. Ask vendors who are participating in the health fair if they can donate an incentive/raffle item.

To encourage participation in the health fair, provide each participant with a card or “passport” to be stamped or checked off by each vendor he or she visits. After a participant has visited a predetermined number of booths and his or her card is validated, he or she is eligible for a free gift or eligible to enter his or her name in a prize drawing.

At registration, provide participants with raffle tickets that they can place in individual raffle drawings. Prizes can be raffled off throughout the day to provide excitement and continuous participation or at the end of the event to allow each participant equal opportunity to win.

H. Additional suggestions

- Set up the health fair the day before, if possible, to avoid any last-minute problems.
- Create a map for attendees to locate information tables, specific vendors, screenings, and other services.
- Give each vendor representative and health fair volunteer a name tag.
- Keep extension cords handy.
- Keep an extra supply of tape, scissors, pens, markers, poster board, etc. handy.
- Hand out raffle tickets for prizes as participants arrive at the fair; provide a basket for raffle tickets to be placed into at the fair exit.
- Develop an evaluation form for attendees to complete to get feedback about the health fair. (Included)

