



AUSTIN
BUSINESS GROUP
— ON HEALTH —

Welcome! The meeting will begin shortly.



***Food for Success: The
Key to an Energized &
Engaged Team***

Announcements

- Thanks for joining us today! We're HYBRID
- Mayor's Exemplary Schools Program is now accepting applications!
- Virtual participants, please remain muted during the presentation
- Questions will be answered at the end of the presentation

Moderators for today's meeting include:



Susan Thompson
ABGOH Co-Chair



Leila Lawson
ABGOH Co-Chair

Agenda

Topics Covered

- Announcements & Introductions
- Speakers:
 - Nutrition Ally
 - Texas Depart. Of Transportation
- Questions & Answers
- Resource Spotlight
- Closing Remarks



Please join us in welcoming our panelists



Cami Eastman

Nutrition Ally



Libby Hall

Nutrition Ally



Gina Akin

Texas Department of
Transportation

Nutrition in the w o r k p l a c e

Implementing Effective Nutrition Programs to Promote
Employee Wellness and Reduce Costs

presenters

Libby Hill, RDN

While her primary focus is disordered eating, Libby has a special interest in helping neurodivergent individuals, managing dietary restrictions, and supporting plant-based diets.

cami eastman, RDN

Cami loves to support individuals with any diagnosis or nutrition-related concern, but her expertise lies in digestive health, disordered eating, and weight concerns.

Cami and Libby are
the Co-Founders of
Nutrition Ally



about nutrition ally



Nutrition Ally is a female-led, mission-driven company of Registered Dietitians dedicated to building a more joyful, well-nourished world.

- Corporate Wellness Nutrition Programming
- Telehealth 1on1 Counseling Services
- Accepting United Healthcare, Blue Cross Blue Shield, TriWest Alliance, and Medicare
- Holistic, inclusive, compassionate, and weight-neutral approach to nutrition care
- Prioritizing sustainable behavior change and personalized solutions

Objectives

- 1 Understand the benefits of workplace nutrition programs**
(i.e. how nutrition impacts health outcomes, insurance costs, and workplace productivity)
- 2 Identify four key considerations for healthy eating in the workplace**
- 3 Assess potential barriers to healthy eating in the workplace and the role of the employer in facilitating solutions**
- 4 Identify ways to implement nutrition programs as part of workplace wellness initiatives**



Benefits of Workplace Nutrition Programs

Employee Wellness and Reduced Costs

Reduced Absenteeism

- Nutrition interventions, such as providing healthy meals and nutrition education, resulted in a **30% reduction in sick days** among employees [1]
 - Clients with unmanaged IBS miss 13.5 days of work or school per year compared to 5 days without IBS [2]

Increased Productivity

- Employees who participated in nutrition-based health promotion programs had a **5% increase in workplace productivity** [1]
- Causes:
 - Improved energy levels and focus
 - Improved Emotional Regulation [2]

Lower Healthcare Costs

- Workplace wellness programs that include nutrition counseling can lead to a **25% reduction in healthcare costs** [1]
- **For every dollar invested** in workplace wellness programs companies saved **\$2.50 to \$4.90** [2]

Improved Health Outcomes

- Evidence based nutrition interventions resulted in:
 - 34% reduction in diabetes-related mortality [1]
 - 30% reduction in obesity-related mortality [2]
 - 25% reduction in kidney failure mortality [3]
 - 20% reduction in cardiovascular disease-related mortality [4]
 - 19% reduction in stroke-related morbidity and mortality [5]
 - 15% reduction in cancer-related mortality [6]

Source: [1] [The Lancet Diabetes & Endocrinology, 2015](#), [2] [The Lancet, 2018](#), [3] [Clinical Journal of the American Society of Nephrology, 2017](#), [4] [European Heart Journal, 2013](#), [5] [Journal of Clinical Hypertension, 2017](#), [6] [Nutrition and Cancer, 2016](#)



Key Nutrition Considerations

Health Promoting Nutrition Practices

Hydration

- On average people only consume 4 cups (24oz) of water per day [1]
- Mild dehydration (just 1-2% loss of body weight in fluids) can impair cognitive function, reducing focus, memory, and alertness. [2]
- Even mild dehydration can lead to increased irritability, stress, and anxiety. [3]



Adequacy

Cost of Under Eating at Work

- Brain fog
- Emotional dysregulation
- Fatigue
- Increased mistakes

Nutrient Needs

Enough variety to support optimal body function



Energy Needs

Enough calories to meet energy needs

Frequency

Skipping meals can lead to low energy, poor concentration, and increased cravings later in the day.

- ~44% of Americans daily calories are consumed at dinner [1]
- Most common reasons for skipping:
 - Busy schedule
 - Stress
 - Low appetite or disconnection from hunger/fullness cues
- **Best Practice** is to eat every 3-4 hours to maintain steady energy and focus.



Sources: [1] Journal of Clinical Nutrition,
2016

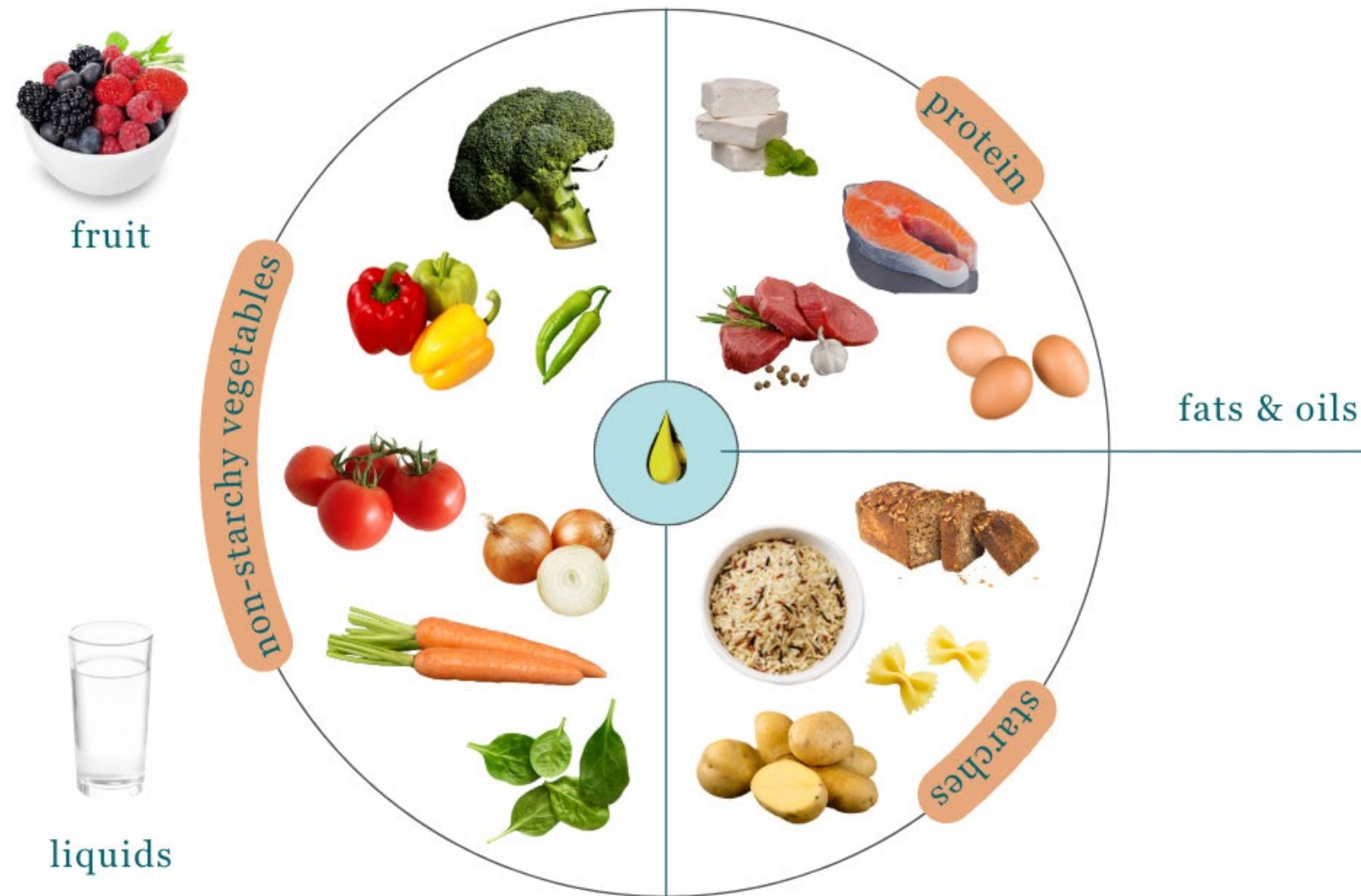
Balance

Balance in nutrition means including a mix of macronutrients—**carbohydrates, protein, and fats**—at meals and snacks to provide steady energy, satiety, and essential nutrients for the body and brain.

🍞 Carbohydrates = Quick and sustained energy

🍗 Protein = Supports focus, muscle repair, and satiety

🥑 Fats = Keeps you full and supports brain function



A balanced and adequate meal should maintain energy for approximately 3-4 hours, while a balanced snack may hold us over 1-2 hours



Assessing Barriers

The Employer's Role

Identify Potential Barriers

Emotional

- Disordered Eating
- Lack of Coping Skills
- Emotional Eating
- Mental Health

Practical

- Financials
- Time
- Knowledge (health literacy)
- Food Desert/Access
- Cultural or ethical practices

Physical

- Neurodivergence
- Physical disability
- Health Conditions
- Food allergies

Not all will be in scope of the employer/employee relationship

Assess Your Workplace

Space

Adequate refrigerators or storage areas? Is there a place to walk, move or stretch? Are employees in the office or remote?

Options

Are there healthy options at catered events or breakroom snacks? Do employees know what good options are?

Safety

Do you have an allergy plan? Are employees aware of their medical benefits r/t nutrition? Is information evidence based?

Time

Are there snack breaks? Is lunch hour respected? Can employees reasonably attend nutrition groups or sessions?

Bandwidth

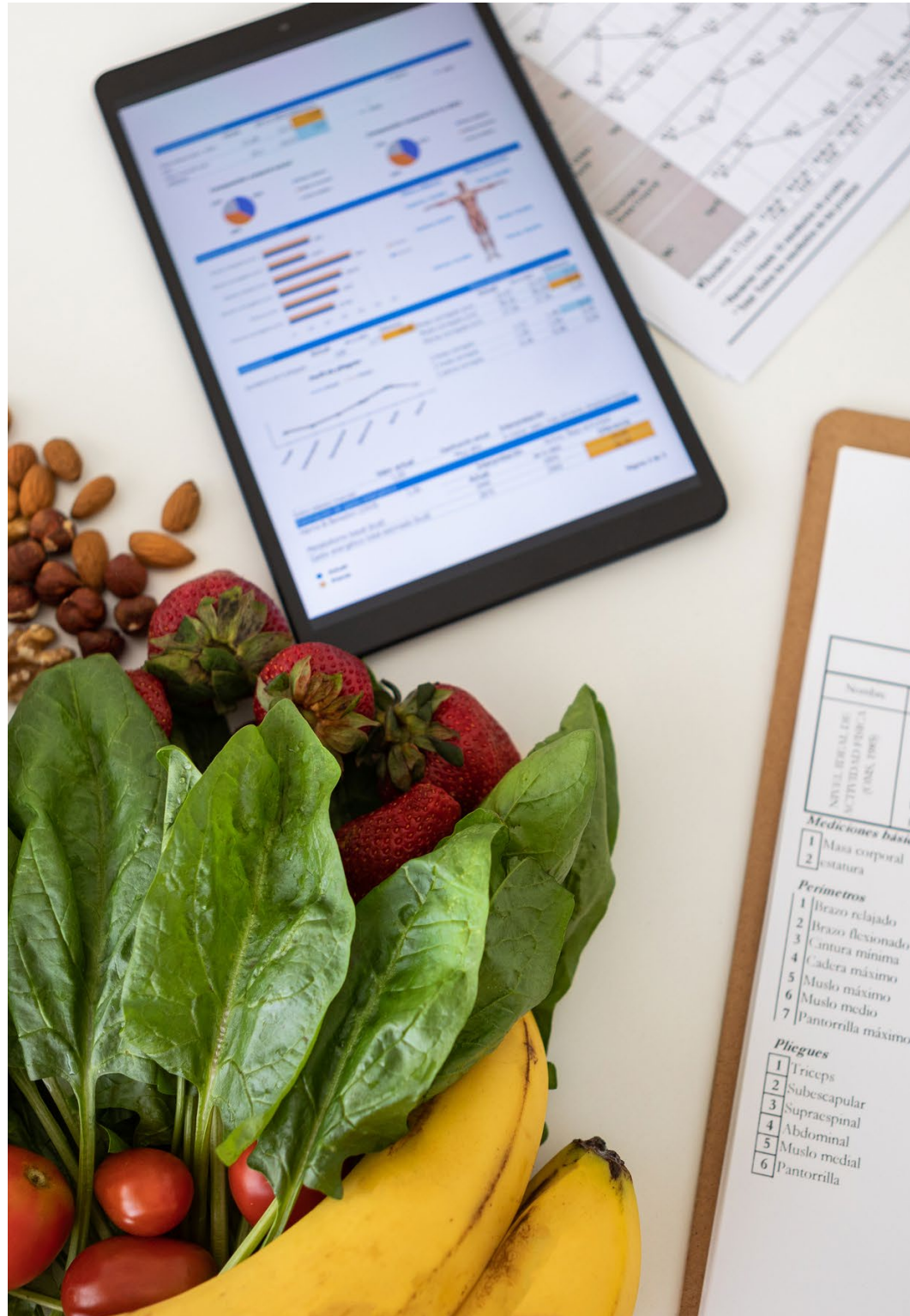
Who will implement programming? What is the lift? What is the budget? Time spent administrating plans?

Understanding Employee Interest

Employee interest predicts employee engagement in a program

- Amplify employee voices: survey staff to make sure interests are considered/met
 - Interest in specific nutrition topics
 - Preferred resources or where to put funding
 - Perceived barriers
 - Open suggestions





Implementing Nutrition Programs in the Workplace

Options and Considerations

Types of Programming

- **On-Site Nutrition**

- Balanced food options for snacks and any catered meals
- Company policies encouraging lunch and snack breaks
- Stipends/gift cards for healthy meals
- Allergy/food surveys to accommodate speciality diets and allergies
- Filtered water or flavor additives to encourage more hydration
- Posted resources educating on nutrition basics

Types of Programming

- **Community-Based**
 - Educational courses or peer support groups (virtual)
 - Lunch and learns or on-site classes providing access to professionals
 - Hosting team wellness challenges
 - Monthly wellness themes / initiatives
- **Individual-Based**
 - 1on1 counseling with a Registered Dietitian (personalized and specialized)
 - By telehealth or in-office, policy for flex time during work hours
 - Often covered by health insurance
 - Meal planning / prepping subscription services

Facilitating a Safe Environment

*If shame were an effective diet plan,
the whole world would be skinny*

- **Focus on empowering vs shame based approach**
 - Focuses on health promoting behaviors instead of weight based goals
 - More effective at improving health outcomes than weight goals
 - Avoids endorsing fad diets, strict meal plans, and unrealistic goals

Facilitating a Safe Environment

- **Reduce shame and promote self efficacy**
 - Considers different backgrounds and histories
 - Considers employees affected by disordered eating, health struggles
 - People experiencing body shame are more likely to cope with food
 - Informing employees of their health plan benefits
- **Control the Quality of Information**
 - Involves educating to understand fact vs fiction in the nutrition space
 - Suggesting specific licensed board certified professionals instead of generic wellness programs or health coaches

Resources Available Today

- Free bundle of handouts/signs for office
 - Basic nutrition guidance
 - Snack pairing guidance
 - How to approach food allergies in the workplace
 - Helpful hydration tips
- [Nutrition Ally Blog](#)
- Free 15-20 minute consultation calls to discuss workplace nutrition initiatives and implementation (*limited spots available*)
- Online programs to build community and improve employee health and nutrition
 - Example: 21 Day Meal Prep Challenge

Contact us



Phone

512-669-5451



Email

hello@nutrition-ally.com



Website

www.nutrition-ally.com



Instagram

[@yournutritionally](https://www.instagram.com/yournutritionally)



Find resources and book a consult here



TxDOT Employee Wellness Program

Gina Akin, Wellness Program Administrator



Texas Department of Transportation ~ TxDOT

- Large government state agency
- Roads, aviation, rail, ferries, travel centers
- 13,000 employees+
 - 11,000 employees in 25 districts
 - 4,500 maintenance employees
 - 1,600 employees at Austin HQ
- 77% male employee population



Health Claim Data

- Back/Joint Pain
- Hypertension
- Diabetes
- Heart Disease

Preventive Health Screening

- 52% Hypertension (2 bp readings)
- 51% Lipid Disorder (newly assessed or unmanaged)
- 34% Pre-diabetes
- 13% Diabetes
- 32% Metabolic Syndrome



Registered Dietitians -- They are the scientists!

Dietitian in the Field

3-part nutrition education series for our maintenance employees over six weeks.

- Engaged our employees in conversation about healthy food choices
- 45 minute discussion
- One-on-one 15-minute consultation



Results

- Confidence level in eating more fruits and vegetables each day improved:
 - Presurvey: 65% confident or extremely confident
 - Post survey: 74% confident or extremely confident
- Confidence level in planning meals with more fruits and vegetables each day improved:
 - Presurvey: 57% confident or extremely confident
 - Post survey: 72% confident or extremely confident
- Confidence level in preparing healthy foods at home improved:
 - Presurvey: 48% confident or extremely confident
 - Post survey: 75% confident or extremely confident

Behavior Change Reported:

“Started eating plant based foods and watch what I put in my stomach.”

“50/50 tea, smaller portions, substitute different options to reduce intakes.”

“Look at the calories I eat.”

“Doing more food prep with healthier choices and I’m watching my portion sizes.”



Wondr Health

Digital weight management program that uses behavioral science to help individuals lose weight and improve their health

Core program delivers clinically-proven behavioral change and lifestyle interventions that treat the root cause of chronic metabolic conditions starting with weight.



Weight management program



Registered Dietitian

Pilot program in Bastrop

12 maintenance men
2 office workers

Pre and post-behavioral survey results showed that participants reported improvements in their confidence to manage their weight, increase in overall energy levels and improvement of their overall eating habits.

Participants also reported embracing new health habits because of the HEAL program. In order of most popular habit cited:

- Drinking more water (92%)
- Reading ingredient labels (92%)
- Eating more slowly (67%)
- Choosing foods with less sodium (67%)
- Practicing deep breathing (67%)
- Reducing portion sizes (67%)



“The HEAL program helped me really take a look at my health and eating habits. I have learned skills that I can use for the rest of my life.”

Get Fit Texas Challenge

2024: Wondr - Community Sessions

- Paired our annual 10-week exercise challenge with our Wondr weight management program.
- Weekly virtual group meeting led by RD
- Over 200 employees signed
- Average 75–80 attendees each session



2025: 'Striving with Strength, Heart and Mind'

3-part webinar series once a month during the challenge:

- Nutrition and Lifestyle for Bone and Muscle Health
- Nutrition for a Healthy Heart: Improve Cholesterol and Blood Pressure
- Nutrition for Brain Health: Improve Your Mood with the Right Food

"I think the overall program is effective. It gives you real actions that you can implement. I like the weekly chat and Q&A. I have lost about 10 lbs and the weekly sessions kept me motivated."

Other Nutrition Programs



Healthy Meeting Guide

- American Heart Association: **Healthy Workplace Food and Beverage Toolkit** to help make healthier food and beverage choices available at meetings.
- **9 Hacks to a Healthier Meeting or Conference** - healthymeeting.org
Center for Science in the Public Interest



Vending machine identification

Identify healthier food and beverage choices with signs or symbols in vending machines, snack bars, or cafeteria - Part AHA toolkit

Healthy Eating on the Road - TxDOT

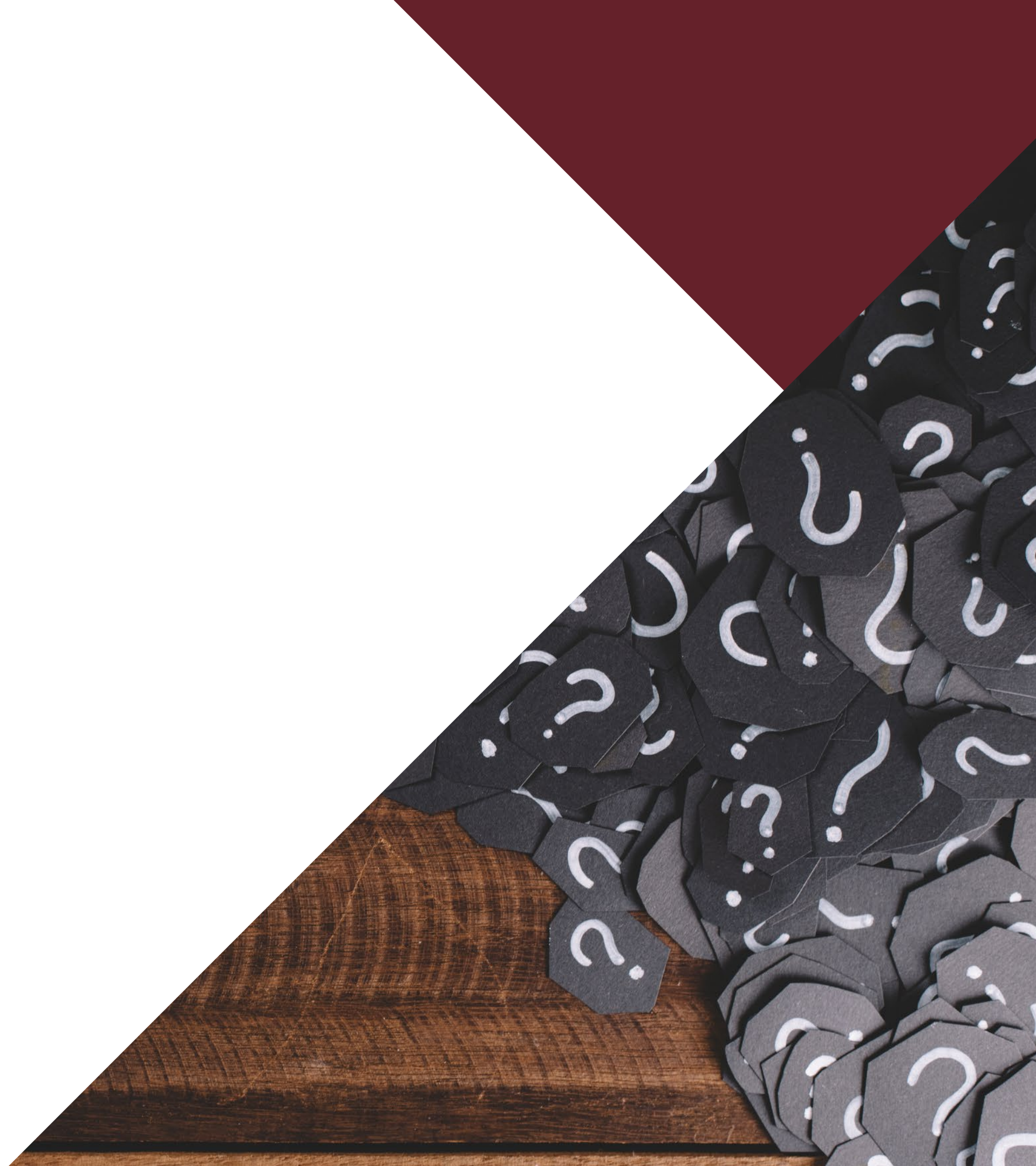
Guidelines and tips on how to hack a healthy lunch while working and traveling on the road - whether you're packing a lunch from home or making a pit stop at a convenience store.





Questions & Answers

- Use the chat box to share what you learned in the breakout session or to send your questions to our panelists.
- A moderator will read questions as they are submitted.

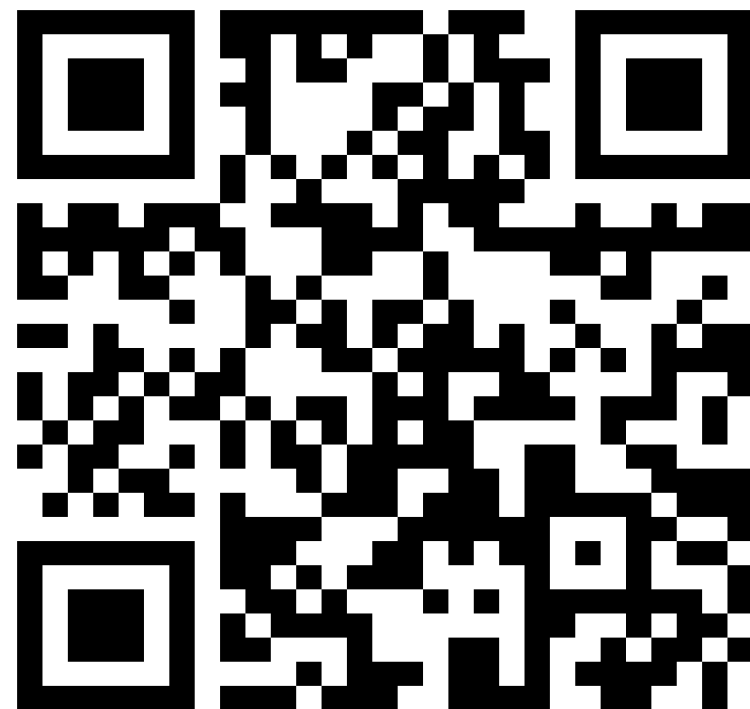


Resource Spotlight



Healthy Workplace Food and
Beverage Toolkit - AHA

Nutrition Ally
Resources



Million Mile Month -
Healthcode



Closing Announcements

- Thank you to our speakers – Cami, Libby, and Gina!
- Today's presentation will be posted to the MHWC website.
- Session evaluation in the chat box & on next slide.
- Don't forget to submit a 2025 Employer Commitment Form – link to online form can be found in the chat box & on next slide.

See you at our next meeting on May 8th, 2025!

Closing Announcements



Session Evaluation



***2025 Employer
Commitment Form***

See you at our next meeting on May 8th, 2025!