



Starting a lunch club is an easy and effective way to solve the problem we all face: where do I go for lunch today and how can I keep it healthy.

- There is no determined set size for a lunch club. You may start out small with say only 6 members and grow to 30 or 40.
 - As a group you will need to work out a schedule on whose day it is to bring a meal. For example if your group has 30 members than every day three members each prepare enough food for 10 people. Once you have cooked, you take two weeks off in the rotation.
 - Prep and clean up schedules should also be made. Usually it is the members who are bringing the food.
 - Lunch clubs are an excellent way to expose yourself to a variety of foods you may never have tried before.
- *Your workplace will need a few basics in order for you to simplify your lunch club: a refrigerator that can hold a fair amount of food, a counter to be used for food prep and a microwave. Some workplace kitchens have plates, silverware, serving dishes available. If yours does not you will have to determine if you will bring your own tableware or purchase paper products as a group.
- *Slow cookers are very handy for buffet style dishes. Use the high setting to bring the food to 140° in under two hours, then set to warm to hold the food through lunch.
- *Provide measuring cups for soups, stews and other dishes that are not already divided so you maintain the correct portion size.
- *Look for recipes that are convenient, can be prepared the night before and are easily transported and reheated.
- *Name a point person who will work up a schedule, enforce guidelines and work with new groups as interest grows. There's an organizer in every group.
- *As a group you will need to decide on dietary guidelines. Maximum number of calories and fat grams a dish can have (ie: 500 calories and 15 grams of fat per serving), sodium, cholesterol, carbs, etc are also considerations. Many lunch clubs also encourage members to use whole grains and include at least one serving of fruits and vegetables. Refer to the links on the Food/Cooking home page for websites that focus on light healthy recipes.
- *Determine the hours for your lunch club. Maybe you all break at the same time or maybe a few of you have a different lunch break. Set the time that best works for your group (11:30-1:00; 12:00-12:30)
- *Provide dietary information on the dish you brought. Include all nutritional information and serving size.
- *Have a list of lunch club members at the table so they can check off their name as they come through. This will give you an idea of the amount of food to bring and if you have any members in your group who are not participating.
- *Have a back up plan in case a member of your lunch club is sick or you inadvertently forgot to bring some thing. A healthy Subway sandwich, or veggie pizza make good last minute alternatives
- *Always have a healthy snack on hand at your desk in case your lunch does not carry you through the entire day. Do NOT hit the vending machine and remember to drink lots of water.