

WORKPLACE WELLNESS

HEALTH FAIR GUIDE



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Health Fair Guide

As employers look for ways to improve their employees' well-being, one avenue being explored is the idea of holding employer-sponsored health fairs. Also referred to as wellness fairs, these events are designed to provide valuable health information and screening services to employees and their families in a convenient "one-stop shop" format.

Health fairs have the potential to reduce your health care costs by teaching employees how to lead healthier lifestyles. By offering free health screenings at these events, employees may be able to identify underlying health issues before they become severe and more expensive to treat.

Setting up a wellness fair, though, can be a difficult task. Hiring an external party to plan your wellness fair can cost hundreds of dollars. Luckily, The Alpha Group is here to help. The following guide provides a detailed timeline for planning your event, sample wellness fair activities and more—allowing you to start planning a successful wellness fair today.

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Health Fair Timetable and Checklist

From securing vendors to drawing up floor maps and creating promotional materials, planning a health fair can be a time-consuming task. Depending on the size and scope of your event, you may need to start planning your event up to a year in advance. Smaller health fairs, though, may require less planning.

Having a clear understanding of what needs to be accomplished and when it needs to be accomplished can help ensure nothing is forgotten. Use the checklist below to help take the guesswork out of planning a wellness fair.

6-12 Months Prior to the Fair

Six to 12 months before the event, take the following steps:

- Establish goals and objectives for the fair and select an event chair.
- Select planning committee members for your staff.
- Form subcommittees with members and have them appoint chairs for various positions.
 - Subcommittees may include those dedicated to logistics, marketing, activities, etc.
- Select the theme, date and time of the event.
 - Themes may be based on the time of year (for instance, “Spring into Health”) or on certain health or safety issues.
- Reserve the location (if off-site).
- Identify possible activities, health screenings, exhibits, services and information.
- Create a budget.

3-6 Months Prior to the Fair

Complete the following steps three to six months before your health fair:

- Decide on what exhibits, activities, health screenings and services will be offered.
- Secure commitments from health care providers, vendors and exhibitors.
- Recruit volunteers, including those who will welcome and direct participants and someone to take photographs of the event.
- Put a committee member in charge of handling event music.
- Secure food vendors or concessions.

- Contact healthy food manufacturers or suppliers to see if they would be willing to donate food samples for the event.
- Reserve rental equipment, tables, chairs, etc.

3 Months Prior to the Fair

Complete the following tasks three months before the event:

- Order educational materials from health organizations.
- Rent hand trucks, carts, and garbage and recycling bins. Purchase extra trash bags and tablecloths.
- Plan and begin securing giveaways, decorations, goodie bags, etc.
- Create employee communications publicizing the event (e.g., posters, email and intranet announcements, flyers and social media posts).
- Create and make copies of registration and evaluation forms for participants to fill out.
- Draw-up a floor plan accounting for traffic flow, long lines, location of electrical, booth space requirements, etc.
 - If offering health screenings, make sure they are offered in a quiet area so that test results can be discussed in private.
- Receive written commitments from health care providers, exhibitors, volunteers and vendors.
- After receiving written commitments, provide the following information to each exhibitor, health care provider and vendor:
 - Timetable of event, including location and set-up times
 - General guidelines
 - Title of their booth
 - Request special equipment for their presentations
 - Ask about any electrical or space requirements

1 Month Prior to the Fair

To promote success, complete the following items one month before the wellness fair:

- Meet with committee chairs to review progress.
- Publicize the event to generate excitement. Continue communication efforts until the day of the event.
 - Contact local television stations, radio and newspapers (if applicable)
- Make booth signs.

- Make maps for exhibitors and participants.
- Create programs that acknowledge exhibitors, health care providers, vendors, volunteers and donors.
- Make a list of items that still need to be purchased.
- Obtain the following supplies:
 - Pens, pencils and colored markers
 - Extension cords
 - Paper clips, rubber bands and pins
 - Stapler and extra staples
 - Tape and poster board
 - Hammer, nails, pliers and screwdriver
 - Batteries
 - First-aid kit
 - Paper towels, napkins, plates, paper cups and plastic utensils (if offering food or drinks).

1 Week Prior to the Fair

As the health fair nears, check these items off of your to-do list:

- Confirm attendance with all participants.
- Print maps and programs.
- Make and print nametags.
- Purchase and safely store perishable items.
- Create a list of volunteer assignments.
- Finalize plans for the registration process and staffing.
- Decide on the method of evaluating the event, and how evaluation forms or surveys will be distributed and collected.

Day Before the Fair

Complete the following tasks to make sure everything is all set for the big day:

- Set up tables, booths, exhibits, chairs, etc.
- Set up the registration table, including:

- Sign-in sheets
- Pens and pencils
- Giveaway goodie bags
- Assignment list of volunteers
- Set up evaluation areas, including forms or surveys for vendors and participants.
- Make sure electrical and sound equipment is ready.

Day of the Fair

To ensure everything goes smoothly, complete these final steps the day of the wellness fair:

- Set up food and refreshment areas.
- Be ready at least one hour prior to opening.
- Direct and instruct volunteers.
- Collect registration information.
- Estimate attendance.
- Collect evaluations at the end of the fair.

After the Fair

After the health fair is over, there are a few items left to do, including:

- Clean up and return anything that was borrowed.
- Send thank you letters to exhibitors, health care providers, vendors, volunteers and donors.
- Calculate and review evaluation results.
 - Determine and document possible areas for improvement for your next fair.
- Report results to appropriate leadership.

In Summary

Thorough preparation and communication is key to a successful health fair. By following the timetable above, you can take the confusion out of event planning and host an informative, yet fun event for your employees and their families.

Wellness Fair Activity Suggestions

Presenting engaging activities and information is key to the success of your wellness fair. Interactive exhibits and booths are more likely to get employees excited and interested in their health and will make them more receptive to the wellness messages being shared.

Therefore, when planning a health fair, it is important to partner with community organizations and businesses that can provide valuable wellness information in a fun, yet informative manner. The more hands-on the activities are, the better. To help get local businesses and organizations on board, emphasize that wellness fairs are not only a great educational opportunity, but they are also an easy way to promote their services to an attentive audience.

Sample Health Fair Activities

Consider including the following activities in your next wellness fair:

- *Alcohol Use and Prevention:* Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) offers resources on alcohol abuse and prevention, including a workshop that teaches parents how to talk with their teenagers about underage drinking. For more information, call 800-GET-MADD or fill out a health fair booth request form [online](#).
- *Back Health:* Ask a local chiropractor to show a display of a backbone and discuss the importance of healthy posture as a way to promote spinal health. Allow chiropractors to advertise their practices by giving out free promotional pens or notepads.
- *Bicycle Safety:* Design a bicycle safety course for employees and their children. Then, have participants ride through age-appropriate courses, while demonstrating the proper hand signals. Require that everyone wear a helmet when going through the course and give out prizes for those who participate.
- *Breast Self-exams:* Contact a local health center to conduct a program on breast self-exams. Ask them to provide visuals that identify breast lumps at various stages of cancer and that show how to properly perform an exam.
- *Child Car Seat Safety:* Ask your local law enforcement to give demonstrations on how to properly install and buckle a child safety seat.
- *Children's Health:* Contact a local health center to present programs on common pediatric health problems, such as caring for a child with a fever, dealing with bed-wetting and preventing ear infections.
- *CPR and First Aid:* Contact a local paramedic, Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) or Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to demonstrate CPR and simple first-aid measures for common ailments.

- *Dental Care:* Ask a local dentist to provide a demonstration of dental care, such as teaching proper brushing or flossing techniques. Ask if the dentist would be willing to provide toothbrushes, floss or toothpaste samples to your employees as a free giveaway for visiting the booth in exchange for the ability to advertise.
- *Fire Safety:* Contact your local fire department to provide safety programs on fire prevention and safety. Download free fire safety tip sheets on the National Fire Protection Association's [website](#), on topics like cooking, escape planning, household equipment and more.
- *Hand Hygiene:* Provide a demo on proper hand-washing by putting a small amount of glitter on participants' hands. Show them the difference between washing with and without soap to show how soap gets rid of glitter (i.e., germs) better than just water. Visit the American Cleaning Institute's [website](#) to download free hand hygiene posters and brochures.
- *Health for Older Workers:* Contact the American Association for Retired Persons (AARP) to set up a booth on resources available to seniors. Download the AARP HomeFit Guide [online](#) to show employees how they can turn where they live into a lifelong home.
- *Healthy at Home:* Create a booth devoted to home health care by outlining which over-the-counter medicines and supplies should be on-hand so employees can adequately provide self-care. Items may include a thermometer, humidifier, cold pack, cough suppressant and bandages. Contact a local pharmacy or retailer for free samples of these items to give away to your employees.
- *Health Screening Tests:* Reach out to local health providers to see if they would be willing to provide free health screenings to your employees. Suggestions for screenings include: blood pressure, body mass index (BMI), glucose, cholesterol and bone density.
 - All medical information obtained from screenings should be kept confidential. If medical information is provided to the employer, it should be in aggregate form that does not disclose, and is not reasonably likely to disclose, the identity of specific employees. Medical information must be used to promote health and prevent disease; it should not be received if the employer does not plan to use it for those purposes.
- *Heart Disease Prevention:* Visit the American Heart Association's [website](#) to download free heart-healthy resources that can be used at your next wellness fair. Resources include a blood pressure tracker and information on lifestyle and risk reduction, cardiovascular conditions, treatments, tests and more.
- *Managing Health Care:* Provide information on how to select a doctor, how to be more proactive in making health care decisions and how to cut health care costs more effectively. Find informative articles, newsletters and videos in Broker Briefcase[®] or reach out to The Alpha Group today.
- *Nutrition:* Create a booth to educate employees on how to eat well, cut down on sugar and fat, and read nutrition labels. Provide handouts of easy, nutritious recipes and information on healthy recipe swaps like substituting spaghetti squash or spiralized zucchini in place of

traditional, carb-heavy pasta. Consider giving away healthy snacks like apples and granola bars to encourage booth attendance.

- *Physical Fitness:* Contact a local health club or YMCA to provide free, five-minute instructions of some of their most popular exercise courses (yoga, Pilates, Zumba, etc.), and ask them to provide information on the importance of leading an active lifestyle.
 - Also consider contacting a local personal trainer or physical therapist to teach employees how to buy the right running shoes, find their target heart rate and more.
- *Poison Prevention:* Create a booth warning employees about how easy it is to mistake poisonous materials for other items, such as food.
 - Design a model displaying medicine and candy and see if employees can tell the difference between them.
 - Highlight the importance of reading labels, especially when you are in a rush or are not wearing your glasses or contacts. To do so, place masking tape over the labels of common household items – toothpaste, arthritis creams, hemorrhoid cream, eye drops, nasal spray or ear drops. Then, see if your employees can decipher what these items are if their vision was altered—helping to emphasize the importance of reading labels.
 - Your local poison control center may also be able to assist with a display.
- *Prenatal Care:* Contact a local OB/GYN to discuss the importance of prenatal care.
- *Skin Cancer Prevention:* Set up an exhibit that teaches employees about what to consider when purchasing sunscreen, how to correctly apply it and how frequently, and which clothing to wear outside to protect themselves from the sun.
- *Stress Management:* Provide information on how stress affects the body and how employees can alleviate stress. Consider renting massage chairs or asking local massage therapists to provide free, short massages. Giveaways could include free stress balls.
- *Tobacco Cessation:* Engage employees in activities that highlight the dangers of smoking. Here's one suggestion:
 - Give each employee a straw and ask them to place it in their mouths. Then ask each participant to pinch his or her nose and breathe only through the straw for one minute. After 30 seconds, ask participants to look at one another (this will usually trigger laughter). After one minute is up, ask participants to describe what it was like to breathe only through the straw. Then, ask them what it was like when they started to laugh. Most often, breathing through a straw is extremely difficult, especially when laughing. This activity demonstrates what life is like for emphysema sufferers.

In Summary

Use the list of activities above to help plan your next health fair. By incorporating a wide variety of wellness topics and presenting this information in a fun, yet educational manner, you can empower your employees with the knowledge necessary to lead healthier lives, and, ultimately, to reduce their health care expenses.

Health Fair Final Steps

At the end of a health fair, it is important to solicit feedback from not only your participants but also from your vendors. Asking for input can help you recognize areas of success and identify opportunities for improvement so you can fine-tune your approach for the next wellness fair.

Consider setting up an evaluation table so participants can comfortably provide feedback near the conclusion of the fair. For vendors, have a committee member or volunteer pass forms out to individual booths and point out where they can be dropped off when they are completed.

The following forms can be used to gather participant and vendor feedback.

Wellness Fair Vendor Evaluation Form

Thank you for participating in 's Wellness Fair! In order to make future events even better, we would appreciate your feedback on the following questions before you leave.

Organization Name: _____

Your Name: _____

1. Please rate the following aspects of 's Wellness Fair:

- | | | | |
|--------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Attendance: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Organization: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Management: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Facilities: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Location of Booth: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Booth Setup: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Publicity: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |

2. Please estimate the number of people that visited your booth: _____

3. Please estimate the number of people who received written information from your booth or asked questions: _____

4. If hosted another wellness fair, would you be interested in participating?

- Yes No

5. Please provide any comments or suggestions on how we can improve our health fair:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!

Wellness Fair Participant Evaluation Form

Thank you for attending 's Wellness Fair! In order to plan future events, we would appreciate your feedback on the following questions before you leave.

1. Why did you decide to attend 's Health Fair? Check all that apply.

- It was free.
- It looked like fun.
- I was curious about my health.
- I haven't felt well lately.
- My co-workers attended.
- Because of the giveaways and prizes.
- I worked the fair.
- Other: _____

2. How did you hear about the Wellness Fair?

- Word of mouth
- Poster
- Intranet post
- Email
- Other: _____

3. Please rate the following aspects of 's Wellness Fair:

- | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Booth topics: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Organization: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Location: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Explanation of screening results: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |
| Overall impression: | <input type="checkbox"/> Excellent | <input type="checkbox"/> Fair | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor |

4. Did you attend any of the health screenings?

- Yes No – If not, why? _____

5. How do you plan on using the information you received at 's Wellness Fair? Check all that apply.

- I do not plan to use the information received.
- I plan to read the written information for my own benefit.
- I plan to share information with others. If so, with who? _____
- I plan to see a doctor.
- I discovered that I have a health problem that I was unaware of.
- I found that someone in my family has a health problem that I was unaware of.
- I learned about health agencies in my area that I was not familiar with before.
- I plan to make changes to my normal routine because of information I learned at the fair.

6. Please list your favorite vendors, booths and activities:

7. Would you attend a wellness fair again next year? Yes No

8. What topics would you like to see featured at another wellness fair?

9. Please provide any general comments and suggestions about the health fair:

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey!