



Cake in the Breakroom

In almost every office there seems to be a constant parade of birthdays, anniversaries, baby showers, retirements, etc. And each of these celebrations includes food. Our culture seems to marry the two items – occasions and food. Not that there's anything wrong with that marriage. But, what happens when there's always cake in the breakroom? It sits there, looking yummy and almost calling you by name. Can you resist the beckoning or do you answer and eat it? While there's nothing wrong with an occasional indulgence, cake every day can add up on your waistline and in your blood sugar reading. What can you do? It would be rude to turn down that coveted corner piece or the slice with all the icing. And if you do say, "No thank you" chances are you're met with resistance and then insistence that you partake of the cake.

Here are a few suggestions on how to address that constant cake issue:

- Select one day a month to be a celebration for all the birthdays happening that month. Then there's only cake once a month instead of several days each month.
- Offer desserts other than cake. How about fresh fruit options (ambrosia salad, anyone)?
- Create a make-your-own-dessert station, for example, fruit tarts. Stock the station with a variety of fresh fruit, ice cream, whole grain tarts, etc.
- Flip the script – offer appetizers instead of dessert. Fresh vegetables and a variety of dips to try. Whole grain crackers and hummus....you get the idea.
- Build a salad – each person bring a different ingredient and they all add up to a salad. One person brings lettuce, another brings cucumbers, someone else brings carrots and the list goes on...
- Suggest doing a potluck meal instead of just dessert. Encourage people to bring a variety of protein sources and side dishes (a great way to get more vegetables).
- Crock pot day – each chef makes an item that is ready in time for the meal break. Think chili cook-off style.
- Host a souper bowl – it's easy to get more vegetables in when you make soup. This could be like the chili cook-off too.

The holiday season can be even more challenging when it comes to cake and everything else. When you're at a party or meal, start off with lots of fruits and vegetables. Look for broth based soups. Choose to try something homemade instead of something pre-packaged. Use the smallest plate available and only go back for more if you're truly hungry (it takes 20 minutes for your brain to realize you're full). Select your food carefully and then enjoy every bite!