

# HEALTH FAIR PROMOTION

The best way to ensure a good turnout for your health fair event is to PROMOTE, PROMOTE and PROMOTE! Utilizing a consistent theme for all promotional materials will help promote and build recognition of the event.

A key point to remember is that different people respond to different messages, so it is important to use as many methods as possible to promote an event. Think about how messages and memos are normally communicated in your organization. If you know a method of communication that works well in your organization, start there.

Promote the event **at least four** weeks in advance. Consider using a different method or a variety of methods to communicate the event each week. Keep the messages interesting by adding more information with each message. This can help raise curiosity and anticipation. Don't forget that word of mouth is often the best method of communication within an organization. Therefore, you will want each person on your planning team to talk up the event. This also works well on the day of the event. Remind people as they go back to their workstations to tell others about the event and encourage them to attend.

Here are some ideas to promote your health fair event. Remember to pick a **variety** of methods to help ensure a large turnout.

- Telephone voice mail message reminders
- Table tents in the cafeteria
- E-mail messages
- An article in the company newsletter
- Banners
- Announcements at employee meetings
- Paycheck stuffers
- Word of mouth
- Flyers on everyone's desk the morning of the event
- Flyers that offer an incentive to participate in the event
- Place posters in highly visible locations such as:
  - The door of the employee entrance
  - In the copy room
  - On restroom mirrors and the back of doors
  - Under the windshield wiper of each employee car in the parking lot
  - In the elevators and/or staircases

# HEALTH FAIR THEMES and ACTIVITIES

**Themes:** Review your organization's goals, corporate philosophy and culture to determine an appropriate theme. Is your organization competitive, conservative, formal, or fun? What age and sex are the majority of the employees? Use this information to develop a theme for your health fair.

Your health fair may be a kick-off for another event, a new health promotion program, or an annual event. You may want to consider the season of the year or [national health observances](#). For example, February has Valentine's Day and is National Heart Month. For a springtime health fair, your theme may be "Spring Into Health."

The best health fairs have a variety of activities. Consider having different types of activities:

1. Awareness & educational information should be fun and interactive. Some ideas include:

Self-care information	Women's/Men's health issues
Humor & its health benefits	Nutritional information
Back care	Dental health
Child safety	First aid
Office safety	Childcare resources
Stress information	Cancer & preventive exam schedules
Ergonomics	Substance abuse information
Recreational safety	

2. Lifestyle information and screenings help build awareness of health risks and provide information on how an individual can make changes in their lifestyle to enhance their health. When considering screenings at a health fair, consider the **confidentiality** of the results. 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:

Blood pressure	Flexibility testing
Body fat analysis	Glucose testing
Body mass index (BMI)	Mobile mammography
Bone density testing	Nutritional analysis
Health Risk Assessments	Total cholesterol testing

3. Demonstrations and activities can add fun and interest to your health fair. Adult learning concepts identify that hands-on opportunities enhance awareness. Some ideas include:

Upper body massages	First aid
CPR	Martial arts
Yoga	Proper lifting
Exercise equipment demonstrations	Aerobic step demonstrations
Healthy cooking	

Remember with any of these activities to check to see if your vendor has freebies! Freebies are a great incentive for participants to come to your event!

# HEALTH FAIR INTERNAL RESOURCES

In planning a health fair event you may want to think about what is available to you within your own organization that may be appropriate for the health fair. Contact staff who may be affiliated with the following departments to get ideas for health fair displays and information:

## **Safety**

- An accident prevention display
- Fire extinguisher demonstrations

## **Food Service**

- Free samples healthy foods
- Discounts on certain food items the day of the health fair
- Food storage safety demonstration/education

## **Transportation**

- Information and sign-ups for rideshare programs
- Safety belt and child safety demonstrations
- Bike helmet safety

## **Employee Club**

- Information and sign-ups for employee recreational events such as softball, biking clubs, and bowling leagues

## **Occupational Health**

- Blood pressure screenings
- First aid demonstrations
- Back care, proper lifting information

## **Communications and Marketing**

- Get them involved in designing logos and materials for the health fair as well as attractive signs and posters

## **Travel**

- Some organizations have travel departments that may be able to assist with raffling off a free trip to a health place or a weekend getaway!

# HEALTH FAIR EXTERNAL RESOURCES

There are a wide variety of external resources available to your organization for a health fair event. External resources can include community agencies, voluntary organizations, and for-profit and non-profit organizations. When inviting these organizations to your health fair, provide them with at least one-month notice. Health fairs are a great marketing tool for outside vendors to display their products and services. However, be clear about what you expect from each vendor. Using outside vendors can make a health fair well rounded and interesting as well as educational. Try not to duplicate services or displays.

The following is a list of organizations that may be able to provide services, information, screening, etc. at your health fair. Don't forget to be creative!

## **Health Plan**

Health Alliance Plan's Health Promotion Department can participate in your health fair event. We can provide interactive displays on a variety of health topics to help your employees learn more about healthy lifestyles. We can also assist in arranging health screenings for your event.

## **Employee Assistance Program (EAP)**

Health fairs are a great place to include your EAP. This is a good reminder of the services they provide to employees.

- Information on the services available from the EAP
- Substance abuse information
- Stress management information

## **Voluntary Organizations**

Many of the following community organizations can provide educational and informational materials for your health fair.

- AIDS organizations and education
- American Cancer Society
- American Diabetes Association
- American Heart Association
- American Lung Association
- March of Dimes
- Mothers Against Drunk Driving

## **Providers of Health Promotion Programs**

There are many different providers of health promotion, prevention and education available for health fair events.

- Chiropractic/podiatrist offices
- Massage therapists
- Exercise equipment specialists
- Sports equipment demonstrations
- First aid demonstrations
- Fitness Centers
- Your local hospital/clinic

## **Government Agencies**

Government agencies can provide education and information on a variety of resources available within your organization's geographical area about recreational activities:

- Boat and swimming safety
- Drinking and driving prevention/substance abuse
- Park and recreation information
- Police and fire safety
- Wildlife fish and game information

## **Community Resources**

A wide variety of resources are available in your community. Some of these include:

- Restaurants/grocery stores for food demonstrations and samplings
- Childcare and eldercare agencies
- Food Co-ops for health food samples and recipes
- Community Education

## **Religious organizations**

Health fairs need to take into account not only mind and body, but the spirituality of individuals:

- Spiritual support/crisis-intervention organizations
- Community family support agencies

# LOCAL RESOURCES

## Local Voluntary Organizations

Many of the following community organizations can provide educational informational material for your health fair:

### American Cancer Society

Metro Detroit Area Service Center  
18505 W. Twelve Mile Rd.  
Southfield, MI 48076  
(248) 557-5353

### American Heart Association

24445 Northwestern Hwy, Ste. 100  
Southfield, MI 48075  
(248) 827-4214

### American Lung Association

MI: Southeast Region  
25900 Greenfield, Suite 401  
Oak Park, MI 48237  
(248) 784-2021

### Hospices of Henry Ford

Administration Offices (8 geographic teams)  
(586) 774-4141

### March of Dimes

27600 Northwestern Hwy  
Southfield, MI 48034  
(248) 359-1550

### Mothers Against Drunk Driving

Macomb County, 59 N. Walnut #206, Mt. Clemens, MI  
48043  
(586) 463-3611  
[www.madd.org/mi/macomb](http://www.madd.org/mi/macomb)

Wayne County, PO Box 85570, Westland, MI 48185-0570  
(734) 721-8181  
[www.madd.org/mi/wayne](http://www.madd.org/mi/wayne)

Oakland County, 3525 Elizabeth Lake Rd, #B, Waterford,  
MI 48328  
(248) 682-2220

Washtenaw County, 5597 New Meadow Drive, Ypsilanti,  
MI 48197  
(734) 665-5638

### Oakland County Health Division

Department of Human Services  
27725 Greenfield Rd,  
Southfield, MI 48076-3625  
(248) 424-7172  
Oakland County Only

### Oakland County Sheriff's Department

1201 N. Telegraph Road  
Pontiac, MI 48341  
SCOPE Office (Alcohol Awareness)  
(248) 393-3022

# HEALTH FAIR INCENTIVES and RAFFLES

Prizes and giveaways can be fun at a health fair event. It helps to build anticipation, participation and excitement. Take some time to think about the use of incentives and raffles for your health fair event.

## **Incentives:**

Incentives can be used to encourage people to participate in the health fair and motivate them to learn about new healthy ideas and lifestyles. Consider incentives that support the theme of your health fair.

To encourage participation in the health fair, provide each participant with a card or “passport” to be stamped or checked off by each booth/display they visit. After they have visited a predetermined number of booths and their card is validated, they are eligible for a free gift or to enter their name in a grand prize drawing.

For each booth that a participant visits, they receive a token. The token can be a representation of your theme. The tokens are turned in for a prize.

To encourage attendance at the health fair, leave half of “something” on employees’ desks the morning of the health fair. They are required to attend the health fair to receive the other half.

## **Raffles:**

Raffles can be a part of your vendors’ display booths and demonstrations. Don’t forget to ask about this when you contact them. Raffles can be implemented in a variety of ways.

Each vendor can have their own raffle for their booth. This provides a variety of prizes and giveaways.

Prizes can be raffled off throughout the day. Be sure to announce the prize winners to build excitement!

A raffle can also be held at the end of the day. This allows each participant equal opportunity to win the prize. Decide who can enter the drawing. It can be part of the registration process, or can be built into the incentive as identified above.

# HEALTH FAIR FLOOR PLAN

When planning a health fair it is important to consider the space you have available for the event. It is best to consider space availability early on so you will know how many vendors and exhibits you can accommodate. A floor plan or layout will help determine the setup and space needs. In designing the floor plan keep the following information in mind:

**Space:** The space vendors need will vary. Let each vendor know in advance how much space they will have, or talk with each vendor in advance to get their needed requirements before designing the floor plan.

**Electricity:** Check with each vendor to determine if they will need electricity for their booth or display. Locate the available electrical outlets and place these vendors in your floor plan first.

**Screening Tests:** If you have screening tests such as blood pressure and cholesterol, place these vendors together. Also consider if one test is performed before another. As screenings are considered personal information, you may want to place these vendors in a quiet area so that test results can be discussed in private with each participant.

**Traffic Flow:** Some booths and display areas are more popular than others and will cause a line to form. If you anticipate this, allow more space for these booths/displays, or place a less popular booth on either side of the popular booth. That way people will visit the less popular booths as they wait in line. Consider having an “Entrance” and “Exit” to ease the flow of traffic.

**Registration:** Having participants register is a great way to determine the number of attendees at the health fair event. This information can be used as part of your health fair evaluation. You can go back to these participants for feedback on the health fair event.

**Vendor Information:** To help the day run smoothly, you may want to consider sending a copy of the floor plan to each vendor letting them know where they will be setting up their booth. Also remind vendors where to park and any information they need to know about which entrance to use to unload their supplies.

**There will be changes at the last minute, so remember flexibility is important!**



# YOUR HEALTH FAIR CHECKLIST

Health fairs offer the opportunity to celebrate health through the use of interactive displays, screenings, games, prizes, and other exhibits. Most importantly they demonstrate your commitment to the health and well being of your employees. Use the following checklist to guide you in planning your health fair.

## 5 to 6 Months Prior to Health Fair

\_\_\_ **Get support from your organization's leaders**

\_\_\_ **Establish a champion within the senior management team**

Champion's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## 4 Months Prior to Health Fair

\_\_\_ **Organize a Planning Committee.** Your planning committee should range from three to eight members. Members' tasks should be defined clearly, with accountabilities and agreed upon time lines.

\_\_\_ **Determine your target audience** - who do you plan to invite? (current employees, retirees, families)

\_\_\_ **Estimate number of employees you expect to attend** (25%-50% total population on-site)

\_\_\_ **Assess employee's needs and interests**

Top Interests: 1. \_\_\_\_\_  
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ **Establish goals and objectives** that create a clear direction for planning and executing your event. Use these to establish benchmarks for evaluating the success of the event.

\_\_\_ **Establish your budget:** Health fairs can be run on a shoestring if your primary goal is to increase awareness of local health resources. If you intend to use the event as a kickoff for a new organizational program or part of a health screening initiative, you'll need a significantly larger budget. If your budget is predetermined, then the planning committee needs to prioritize the most important aspects of the event. Typical budget items include:

- Site fees, equipment (i.e. VCR) or table rental
- Health screening services
- Vendors – some vendors charge to come to a health fair; be sure to clarify
- Incentives – drawing for a large incentive (value at least \$100) typically creates more interest than smaller items for each participant
- Food/Beverage – while optional, having snacks, fresh fruit, and other refreshments may help draw participants to your event
- Promotion –for advertising costs for banners, signs, decorations, etc.

\_\_\_ **Establish your theme:** A theme creates your promotional campaign and helps focus your programming needs regarding the type of exhibits, demonstrations, and activities you plan to provide. Schedule it to coincide with a national health observance (e.g. February is Heart Health Month, September is National 5-A-Day Month, etc.), create a seasonal theme such as Spring into Health or a fun theme like a Beach Party, Country Western, sports themes, or driving themes (Road to Wellness).

## **3 Months Prior to Health Fair**

\_\_\_ **Establish your implementation and evaluation plan:** Evaluations are critical for measuring the effectiveness of your health fair and helping you plan future events. Process measures include tracking the number of participants and surveying them about the content and quality of the event. Outcome measures include survey questions about what they learned and if they plan to make changes based on their experience.

\_\_\_ **Set date, time, and location:** a 3 to 4 hour time period is recommended for most worksites

\_\_\_ **Develop promotional strategies:** Maximizing participation is the name of the game. Use your organization's communication channels to maximize visibility, awareness, and interest in your event.

Top 3 strategies:

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ **Identify program topics and preferred format** – education, demonstrations, and/or activities.

\_\_\_ **Identify your program resources:** Begin with organizational resources and then move to HAP and other organizations until your programming needs are met.

\_\_\_ **Contact Vendors** - Create a list and assign committee members to contact specific vendors.

## **2 Months Prior to Health Fair**

\_\_\_ **Arrange parking/security services**

\_\_\_ **Contact and invite vendors:** Allow plenty of time for gaining commitments. You may need to place follow-up calls if you don't get a prompt response from key vendors. Ask for their equipment and special needs. Ask if they can donate any prizes.

\_\_\_ **Determine the logistics of your health screenings** (pre-registration, # to schedule per hour)

\_\_\_ **Design your floor plan:** You need ample space to accommodate participants and vendors. Plan the layout to facilitate programming features such as screenings and demonstrations. Consider the following:

- Amount of space a vendor needs (area of 8 – 10 feet is usually adequate)
- Determine electrical and other audiovisual requirements
- Identify a welcome/registration area
- Consider traffic flow, screening waiting areas, and private places for health screening stations (ex. hearing screenings need a quiet area)
- Identify demonstration/lecture areas

## **1 Month Prior to Health Fair**

\_\_\_ **Promote your event:** Promote all aspects of the health fair – examples of booths, refreshments and incentive items. Common communication techniques/channel for promoting your health fair include the following options:

- Bulletin boards
- Corporate newsletter
- E-mail
- Posters in high traffic areas (common rooms, bathrooms, etc.)
- Table tents
- Flyers
- Department announcements
- Memos

\_\_\_ **Begin taking pre-registrations** for health screenings (if applicable)

\_\_\_ **Arrange all food and prizes.**

## **3 Weeks Prior to Health Fair**

\_\_\_ **Send confirmation letter to vendors**, including map of your location, appropriate phone numbers, parking, and security information. Ask vendors to arrive 60 minutes prior to the start of the event.

## **1 Week Prior to Health Fair**

\_\_\_ **Re-confirm all services with vendors.**

\_\_\_ **Assign someone to greet and direct vendors as they arrive.**

\_\_\_ **Review floor plan.**

\_\_\_ **Remind employees to pre-register for screenings.**

## **Day of Health Fair**

\_\_\_ **Remind employees about today's event** – be sure to mention food, prizes or other fun activities.

\_\_\_ **Greet vendors as they arrive** - direct them to restrooms, health fair room, etc.

## **After Health Fair**

\_\_\_ **Gather aggregate results from the health screening** - including the number of participants screened, number of high-risk individuals, etc.

\_\_\_ **Review vendor and participant feedback** to determine the success of your event. Were the goals and objectives achieved? Identify any changes or improvements for your next event. Keep a record of everything you did in planning your event to guide your future health fair planning.

\_\_\_ **Send thank you letters** to all participating vendors, include a summary of event highlights.