New York City
Food Standards

CAFETERIAS/CAFES

Implementation Guide

NYC Health

Overview

The New York City Standards for Cafeterias/Cafes include twenty guidelines that can help increase the availability of healthier food and beverage options. By following the Standards, your cafeteria can make the healthy choice the easy choice for employees and visitors.

This guide provides examples, tips, and tools to help you apply each standard to your cafeteria. Share this with vendors, caterers, and staff involved in planning, purchasing, or preparing food and beverages served.

Table of Contents

Fruits and Vegetables....3

Sandwiches, Salads, and Entrees....3

- Tips to Reduce Sodium....3

Soups and Sides....4

Breakfast Breads, Desserts, and Snacks....4

- Tips to Reduce Calories in Breakfast Breads and Desserts....4
- How to Calculate Calories and Sodium in Food....5
- Tips to Implement Standards for Pre-Packaged Snacks....6

Cooking Method....6

Trans Fat....6

- How to Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Meet the Standards....7

Beverages....8

- Tips to Make Healthy Beverage Choices Easier....8

Placement, Promotion, and Pricing....9

- Examples of Healthy Advertisements....9
- Three Ways to Post Calories in Your Cafeteria....10

For more information, please contact: **nycfoodstandards@health.nyc.gov**

Standards for Cafeterias/Cafes

Fruits and Vegetables

1 Offer at least four different fruit choices.

All must be fresh fruit options.

Examples: whole fruits such as apples, bananas, and oranges; cut fruit salad

2 Offer leafy green salads and at least one vinegar-based salad dressing.

Both must be available during lunch and dinner service.

Examples of salad options: salad bar, side salad, grab-and-go salad, salads made-to-order

Examples of vinegar-based dressings: oil and vinegar, non-creamy vinaigrettes

Eating a healthy meal can help prevent weight gain, and lowers your risk of heart disease and diabetes.

Sandwiches, Salads, and Entrees

3 Among sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered:

All have no more than 700 calories.

At least 50% have no more than 500 calories.

4 At least 50% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered have no more than 800 mg sodium.

Applies to core menu items and pre-made entrees at all meals served.

Examples of breakfast entrees: omelets, whole wheat pancakes, oatmeal

Examples of lunch and dinner entrees: Greek salad, roasted chicken, grilled fish with vegetables

Applies to recipes for a standard order at stations where customers can customize menu items (see a sandwich example on page 5).

Examples of customizable stations: deli counter, salad bar, burrito bar, pasta station, stir-fry station, yogurt parfait bar

5 At least 50% of all sandwiches, salads, and entrees offered, when applicable, are made with whole grains.

Make whole grain options available when grain-based items are offered or are part of a dish such as sandwiches and wraps, rice dishes, pasta meals, and soups.

Examples: breads and wraps with whole wheat/whole grain listed as the first ingredient, brown rice, whole wheat pasta, whole wheat couscous, quinoa, barley, bulgur, oats

Tips to Reduce Sodium

- Reduce portion sizes.
- Purchase fresh, frozen, or dried vegetables and beans.
- If purchasing canned products, compare Nutrition Facts labels of similar products and choose foods with the lowest sodium content or ask for “no salt added” options.
- Prepare soups from scratch.
- Use homemade stock or purchase lower sodium soup bases, consommé, and broths.
- Prepare entrees from scratch and use alternative seasonings such as citrus, vinegar, herbs, and spices.

Soups and Sides

6 Offer at least one steamed, baked, or grilled vegetable option daily that has no more than 200 mg sodium per serving.

- Applies to lunch and dinner.
  - Examples: sautéed spinach, roasted winter squash, steamed asparagus, grilled eggplant or zucchini, steamed vegetable medley
- May include raw vegetables (e.g. carrot sticks).
- Does not include starchy vegetables such as potatoes and corn.

7 All soups offered have no more than 480 mg sodium per 8 ounce portion.

- A 12 ounce portion should contain no more than 720 mg sodium; a 16 ounce portion no more than 960 mg sodium.

Breakfast Breads, Desserts, and Snacks

8 At least 50% of all breakfast breads have no more than 300 calories.

- Applies to menu offerings per meal per day.
  - Examples: muffins, pound cakes, scones, pastries, croissants, bagels, cinnamon buns

9 At least 50% of all desserts have no more than 200 calories.

- Examples: cakes, pies, pudding, gelatin, flan, cookies, frozen yogurt, brownies

In the last 50 years portions have increased significantly. Soda, French fries, and hamburgers have, in some cases, tripled or quadrupled in size. These extremely large portions contribute to the obesity crisis.

Tips to Reduce Calories in Breakfast Breads and Desserts

- When baking, double your yield by halving portion size.
- When purchasing prepared items, see if your vendor can supply miniature pastries, cookies, bagels, muffins, and cakes.
- Sell desserts individually instead of packaging multiple portions together — for example, sell single cookies rather than a package of three.
- Offer 1 ounce dessert cups — small individual portions of layered cakes, such as tiramisu or strawberry shortcake.
- Cut pre-portioned slices of cakes, pies, and brownies in half.
- Decrease portion sizes of puddings, gelatins, custards, flans, and ice creams. Try filling a 6 ounce container with only 4-5 ounces.

How to Calculate Calories and Sodium in Food

Use the tips below to help you obtain calorie and sodium information for the foods you serve.

Food Made from Recipes

1. Ask your chef for the recipe. You will need to look at serving size, number of servings the recipe makes, and amount of each ingredient needed for the recipe.
2. Enter the recipe into nutrition software. If you do not have nutrition software, examples of free resources available include:

   - USDA's My Plate Supertracker: Choosemyplate.gov/supertracker-tools.html
   - USDA National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference: Ndb.nal.usda.gov
   - SELF Nutrition Data: Nutritiondata.self.com
   - WebMD Food-o-Meter: Webmd.com/diet/healthtool-food-calorie-counter

Purchased Foods

1. If item is packaged, read the Nutrition Facts label on the individual or bulk packaging to determine calorie and sodium content per serving (see example on page 7).
2. If no nutrition information is available, look for product information online or contact your vendor to obtain the Nutrition Facts label.

Tips to Enter Nutrition Information Accurately

When entering ingredients from a recipe into nutrition software, always choose an option from the database that is closest to what you use in your kitchen. For example, if the recipe includes tomatoes, you need to know whether they are fresh, frozen, or canned. If canned, find out if they are whole, diced, or crushed, and if they are regular, low sodium, or "no salt added."

Whenever possible, enter the exact brand of ingredients you are using into the nutrition software. Sodium values may vary significantly between brands, so your calculations will be more accurate if you enter the values exactly as they appear on the Nutrition Facts label.

Example Calculation

Many cafeterias have made-to-order stations that offer many possible meal combinations. In this case, calculate calories and sodium using the recipe for a standard order, based on what is most popular or what can be customized further. Communicate nutrition information for additional toppings and condiments on the menu board.

Turkey Avocado Sandwich Recipe:

4 oz low sodium turkey (2 oz contains: 60 calories, 150 mg sodium)
2 slices whole wheat bread (1 slice contains: 100 calories, 120 mg sodium)
1 quarter avocado (1 quarter contains: 124 calories, 0 mg sodium)

Ingredient	Calorie Calculation	Sodium Calculation
Turkey	60 calories x 2 servings = 120 calories	150 mg x 2 servings = 300 mg
Bread	100 calories x 2 slices = 200 calories	120 mg x 2 slices = 240 mg
Avocado	124 calories	0 mg
Sandwich Total	**444 calories**	**540 mg sodium**

DELI COUNTER MENU BOARD

Turkey Avocado Sandwich
444 calories • 540 mg sodium

EXTRA

Lettuce and Tomato
12 calories • 4 mg sodium

Swiss Cheese
90 calories • 35 mg sodium

Cheddar Cheese
110 calories • 180 mg sodium

10 All pre-packaged snacks meet the following criteria, per package:

Pre-packaged is defined as food items packaged by the manufacturer.

Examples: chips, granola bars, trail mix, nuts, ice cream sandwiches, frozen fruit bars, ice cream cups, yogurt, string cheese, cereal

Calories: no more than 200 calories

Total fat: no more than 7 grams

- Nuts, seeds, nut butters, and cheese are exempt
- Products containing nuts or nut butters are exempt

Saturated fat: no more than 2 grams

- Nuts, seeds, nut butters, and cheese are exempt

Trans fat: 0 grams trans fat

Sodium: no more than 200 mg

- Cottage cheese: no more than 400 mg

Sugar: no more than 10 grams

- Fruit and vegetable products with no added sugar are exempt
- Cereals with dried cranberries, dates, or raisins are exempt
- Yogurt: no more than 30 grams of sugar per 8 ounces

Fiber: contain at least 2 grams of fiber, if product is grain/potato-based (e.g. granola bars, crackers, pretzels, chips)

Snacking in excess can lead to weight gain. Snacks, when consumed, should add healthy nutrients to the overall diet and help curb hunger.

Cooking method

11 No use of deep fryers; no deep frying.

Recommend avoid purchasing products that have been par-fried (e.g. French fries, samosas, Jamaican patties).

Examples of healthy cooking methods: grilling, boiling, steaming, baking, sautéing

Trans fat

12 All items contain 0 grams trans fat per serving.

Look at the Nutrition Facts label for the amount of trans fat per serving.

Avoid foods with "partially hydrogenated" vegetable oils in the ingredients list.

Examples of foods that may contain trans fat: margarine, oil, baked goods, baking mixes, sauce mixes, pudding, snacks

Tips to Implement Standards for Pre-Packaged Snacks

A product must meet all of the nutrient criteria. Foods that are slightly over the limit cannot be stocked.

Foods that are exempt from any nutrient criteria must still meet all other criteria. For example, a package of nuts is exempt from the fat and saturated fat criteria. This item must still meet the criteria for calories, sodium, trans fat, and sugar.

A grain/potato-based food is an item made from wheat, potatoes, corn, oats, rice, or any other grain. Look for these on the ingredients list below the Nutrition Facts label.

How to Use the Nutrition Facts Label to Meet the Standards

The Nutrition Facts label is an important tool to help you determine if the items you are purchasing meet the nutrient criteria. A Nutrition Facts label is typically found on the individual product packaging or the outside case for bulk products. If the item does not have a label, ask your vendor or the product manufacturer to provide this information. Compare the information on the Nutrition Facts label with each of the criteria to determine if an item can be purchased.

Example: granola bar

This product must meet the standards for pre-packaged snacks (see page 6).

Always look at *Servings per package*. Foods must meet the nutrient criteria for the entire package.

This item is grain-based, so the fiber criterion applies.

Oats listed in the ingredients means this is a grain-based food.

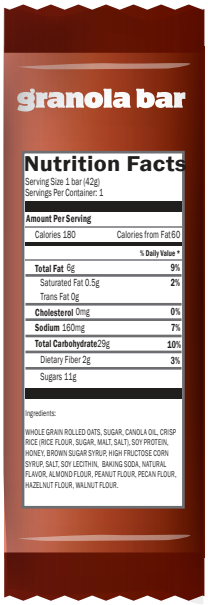
Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1 bar (42g)
Servings Per Package: 1

Amount Per Serving	
✔ Calories 180	Calories from Fat 60
	% Daily Value *
✔ **Total Fat** 6g	**9%**
✔ Saturated Fat 0.5g	**2%**
✔ Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	**0%**
✔ **Sodium** 160mg	**7%**
Total Carbohydrate 29g	**10%**
✔ Dietary Fiber 2g	**3%**
✘ Sugars 11g	

Ingredients:

WHOLE GRAIN ROLLED OATS, SUGAR, CANOLA OIL, CRISP RICE (RICE FLOUR, SUGAR, MALT, SALT), SOY PROTEIN, HONEY, BROWN SUGAR SYRUP, HIGH FRUCTOSE CORN SYRUP, SALT, SOY LECITHIN, BAKING SODA, NATURAL FLAVOR, ALMOND FLOUR, PEANUT FLOUR, PECAN FLOUR, HAZELNUT FLOUR, WALNUT FLOUR, NUT, PECAN, HAZELNUT AND WALNUT INGREDIENTS.



Product assessment:

Although all other nutrients meet the criteria, sugar is too high, so this product ***cannot*** be stocked.

Tip: Pre-packaged items with more than one serving per package require some calculations to determine if they meet the nutrient criteria. For example, if the product says 2 servings per package, all nutrient values must be multiplied by 2 to determine the "per package" amounts.

Beverages

13 Ensure water is available at no charge.

- Recommend posting a sign to indicate that water is available free of charge.
- Meets standard if water fountain or cooler is available inside cafeteria or cafeteria seating area.

Sugary drinks are a large contributor to the obesity epidemic.

14 At least 75% of all beverage options are low calorie beverages (beverages that contain 25 calories or less per 8 ounces).

- Applies to fountain drinks, bottled drinks, and hot beverages (e.g. coffee drinks, tea, hot chocolate).
  - Bottled beverages are counted by number of units stocked, not by varieties stocked.
  - Fountain beverages are counted by number of slots per machine.

Low Calorie Beverages

Beverages with 25 calories or less per 8 ounces:

- Water
- Plain seltzer
- Flavored seltzer
- Flavored water that meets calorie limit
- Drinks labeled "diet" or "zero"
- Unsweetened teas

High Calorie Beverages

Types of beverages that may contain more than 25 calories per 8 ounces:

- Regular soda
- Sports drinks
- Flavored waters with added sugars
- Energy drinks
- Lemonade and juice drinks
- 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- Sweetened tea and coffee drinks
- Coconut water
- Milk

15 All high calorie beverages are sold in 16 ounce containers or smaller.

- Applies to all high calorie beverages, including 100% juice.
- At fountain machines, maximum cup size is 16 ounces for all beverages, including for purchase of low calorie beverages.

Tips to Make Healthy Beverage Choices Easier

- Make the healthier choice the cheaper choice. Set lower prices for water and other low calorie beverages than for high calorie beverages.
- Place water at eye level in beverage coolers.
- Place high calorie drinks on the bottom shelf in beverage coolers.
- Place bottled water in baskets or bins at the entrance, next to the exit, and near popular foods to make them more accessible.

Placement, Promotion, and Pricing

16 Stock only healthy options near the entrance to the cafeteria and at the registers.

- Beverages stocked at entrance and checkout must contain 25 calories or less per 8 ounces.
- Pre-packaged snacks stocked at entrance and checkout must meet all pre-packaged snack nutrient criteria (see page 6).

  Example foods: fresh fruit, small packages of dried fruit or nuts, yogurt

  Example beverages: water, seltzer, low calorie beverages

17 Advertising, promotional, and/or marketing materials in the cafeteria can only be for healthy food and beverage options. This includes promotion as part of a value meal.

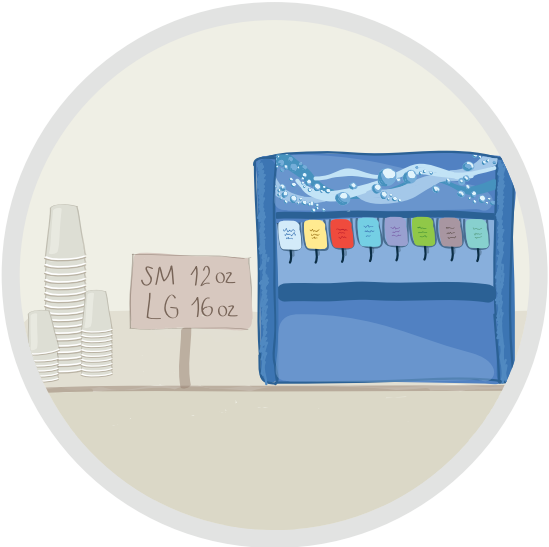
- Applies to advertisements on beverage coolers, fountain beverage machines, menus, and ice cream coolers.
- Includes advertisements from vendors as well as internal promotional materials.

  Examples of unhealthy advertisements: soda advertisement on beverage cooler, pizza advertisement at pizza kiosk, brand advertisement at deli counter portraying large sandwich

  Examples of unhealthy internal promotional materials: sign advertising hamburger and French fry value meal, sign near register directing customers towards ice cream cooler, poster indicating discount on high calorie beverages

- Recommend healthy advertisements and food promotions.

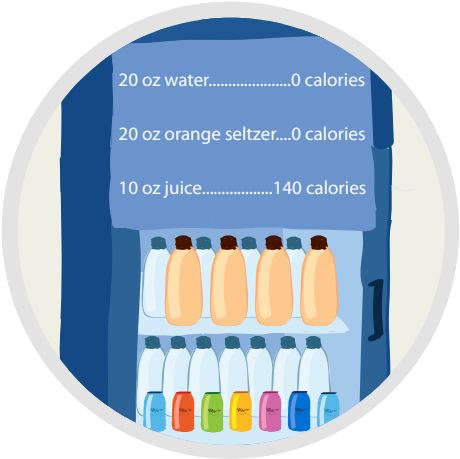
Examples of Healthy Advertisements



18 Post calorie information for items that do not have a Nutrition Facts label.

- Items must be labeled with calories per item served.
- At self-serve stations, calorie labeling should reflect scoop size or amount served.
  Examples: hot food bar, salad bar, pasta station, bulk snacks, salad dressing
- Labels must be clearly displayed on menu board or signs adjacent to food station.
  Exemptions: items not listed on menu such as condiments, daily specials, custom orders
- Recommend labeling other nutrients: sodium, saturated fat, sugar, fiber

Three Ways to Post Calories in Your Cafeteria



19 Ensure at least one healthy value meal is available daily. The whole meal should contain:

- **No more than 650 calories**
- **No more than 800 mg sodium**
- **A fresh fruit or serving of a non-starchy vegetable**
- **Water**
  - ***Value Meal*** is defined as anything that combines more than one menu item that would otherwise be sold separately.
  - At least one healthy value meal must be available on all days, at all meals if other value meals are offered.
    Examples: grilled salmon with a side salad and water, half sandwich with fruit and water, omelet with fruit salad and water
  - Unsweetened coffee or tea can be substituted for water.
  - Healthy value meal must be priced lower than other value meals.

20 Sandwiches are available in half-size portions at half the price of a full-size sandwich.

- At least one type of sandwich must be offered in a half-size portion.
- Recommend posting a sign at the deli counter indicating this option is available or offering the half sandwich as a grab-and-go option.

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