

# HEALTH & WELLNESS MODULE

## The Nexus of Sustainability, Health, and Wellness

Sustainability is about more than using ecological resources wisely. Sustainability considers people and prosperity in addition to the planet (The Three P's: People, Planet, and Prosperity). You cannot have a green office without caring for your most important asset - the people.

This module will focus on three areas at the intersection of environmental sustainability and wellness: Indoor air quality, exercise, and nutritious foods. Paying attention to Indoor air quality means being conscious of what goes into the products you consume, such as cleaning products or your new office carpet. The goal is to make purchasing decisions that limit exposure to toxins, improving employee health and lowering your office's environmental footprint.

Exercise, such as taking the stairs and biking or walking to meetings where possible, improves physical fitness and saves energy. Similarly, taking meetings or lunch outdoors or opening the blinds to let in natural light can improve mood and sleep while also saving energy.

Lastly, we encourage your workplace to offer fresh, local, and chemical-free food for events. Healthy foods are not highly processed, they reduce plastic waste and packaging, emit fewer greenhouse gases with less transportation, and support sustainable agriculture and our local farmers.

## Why is Health & Wellness Important at UNC?

Workplaces can have a positive impact on the health of employees when they create a culture of wellness and environments that enable good choices. UNC has one of the nation's best schools of public health. The university's 13,000 employees deserve work environments that incorporate public health knowledge.

The [Wellness Champions Initiative](#) is an innovative program by the Department of Work/Life & Wellness that brings creative, personalized solutions for health and well-being to departments across campus. Volunteer Wellness Champions form committees to evaluate their current workplace, set goals, implement programming, and earn rewards for their school/division. With the support and resources of the Total Wellbeing Team, Wellness Champions and Committees are empowered to create programs specific to their school/division's needs.

## Green Office Tasks

**To green your office and complete the health and wellness module:**

1. Check that your office already has a Wellness Champion.
  - a. Visit this website to gather information about the Wellness Champions Initiative Committees: <https://hr.unc.edu/benefits/work-life/wellness-champions/>.
  - b. If not, encourage a co-worker to take up this position during open enrollment next spring.
2. Connect with a Wellness Champion and join their Wellness Committee.
3. Report this connection.
4. Complete 8 out of the 15 health & wellness tasks.

**Health & Wellness Tasks**  
**Complete 8 out of the 15 tasks below.**

Task	Resources	Check
Encourage faculty and staff who are able to use the stairs instead of the elevator by putting up signs.	<a href="#">Burn Calories, Not Electricity Sign</a>	
Host walking meetings when possible.		
Share information about free on-demand fitness classes to do at work or home.	<a href="#">Free On-Demand Fitness Classes</a>	
Send an email to encourage faculty and staff to spend breaks and lunch hours outside.		
Utilize natural day lighting when possible.		
Encourage employees to bring in snacks of local fresh fruit and vegetables to share instead of processed foods. This saves calories and carbon!		
Use one of the Botanical Garden’s approved caterers to incorporate fresh, local, and less meat-intensive foods into office event catering.	<a href="#">NC Botanical Gardens Approved Caterers List</a>	
Sponsor a staff workday at the Edible Campus or Carolina Campus Community Gardens.	<a href="#">Edible Campus</a> <a href="#">Carolina Community Garden</a>	
Share information about Produce Box, a program that delivers fresh fruits and veggies to your workplace or home. UNC employees receive discounts through Blue Cross Blue Shield.	<a href="#">The Produce Box</a>	

Share information about the free Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less online weight management program.	<a href="#"><u>Eat Smart, Move More, Weigh Less</u></a>	
Share information about Mindfulness & Self-Compassion resources and Wellness Wednesday Webinars.	<a href="#"><u>Work/Life &amp; Wellness Programs</u></a>	
Share information to cope with stressful times, including Building Community Together, Emergency Loans, and the Employee Assistance Program.	<a href="#"><u>Work/Life &amp; Wellness Programs</u></a>	
Send an email encouraging purchasing officers to consider indoor air quality when making purchases.	<a href="#"><u>EPA Guide to Office Air Quality</u></a>	
Bring plants to the office. They improve indoor air quality and make people happy.	<a href="#"><u>20 Best Air-Purifying Plants</u></a>	
Wildcard: Have an idea for another task not listed? Reach out to Sustainable Carolina's Green Office Program to see if it will work!	<a href="#"><u>Sustainable Carolina Contact</u></a>	
<b>TOTAL</b>		

## Resources & Contacts

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