



Health Awareness Day
**Planning
Guide**

GO YOU[®]



Introduction

A Health Awareness Day (or health fair) event for your employees and their family members is an opportunity for your organization or company to offer the following services.

- Disseminate health information
- Raise awareness of targeted health issues
- Provide demonstrations of healthy practices
- Provide preventive health screenings and immunizations
- Inform about available wellness program resources

The appeal of a Health Awareness Day is that it can accomplish these goals efficiently for a large number of people in a single, fun event that they will be eager to attend. The event can serve as a health promotion and wellness program launch, with activities and objectives tied to your organization's health risks and cost drivers.

This guide is provided by Cigna to help you with planning, implementing and evaluating a Health Awareness Day. Cigna does not directly sponsor Health Awareness Days, but we encourage employers to consider them for their health promotion and wellness programs, and we can provide support for such events. Talk to your Cigna account team if you would like our help.

Form a committee

Planning for a Health Awareness Day should begin 6 months to one year before the event. The first step should be to form a planning and coordinating committee. There is too much work for 1 person. The core committee should consist of about six to eight members. This group will be responsible for planning and coordinating all of the activities outlined in this guide. However, you will want to recruit additional volunteers as needed for other duties.

The committee should be diverse, and its members should come from various areas and levels of the organization. You will want people who are skillful at organizing events and motivating people, and whom you can count on for the long haul – this task will be ongoing for the better part of a year.

The first task for the committee is to choose a chairperson and possibly a co-chair. The primary role of the chair is to facilitate committee meetings and lead the planning process, while consulting with others and delegating as appropriate. A co-chair's responsibility is to assist the chairperson and fill in for them when necessary.

Decide on goals and objectives

Next, it is critical to have clear, written goals and objectives to guide the planning of your event and evaluation of its success. Ask yourselves what it is you are trying to accomplish with a Health Awareness Day. Work with your senior leadership to get their input and support for a set of goals and objectives that complements the business strategy. The goals and objectives should also support the mission and purpose of your wellness program.

Goals are broad and high-level, and point the way toward objectives, which are more specific. Both will help you select appropriate activities for the event. Some examples of goals are to:

- Help employees and their family members choose healthier lifestyles.
- Reduce the health risk factors of employees and family members.
- Increase employees' and family members' use of preventive health services.
- Reduce (or slow the growth of) health care costs to employees and the organization.
- Reduce absenteeism.
- Increase productivity.

From the above goals you might derive objectives such as:

- Educate employees and their family members about the impact of diet on their health.
- Educate employees and their family members about the benefits of exercise and the consequences of inactivity.
- Educate employees and their family members about the long-term effects of smoking on their health and on those exposed to secondhand smoke.
- Screen employees and their family members for cholesterol, blood pressure, glucose, BMI, etc.
- Provide individual health coaching on results and recommendations from those screenings.
- Advise employees and family members about the need to receive screenings for breast, cervical, and colorectal cancer, plus how, where, and at what age they should do so.
- Make employees and their family members aware of resources available to them (from Cigna, etc.) for tobacco cessation, weight loss, stress management, disease management, exercise, healthy pregnancies and babies, etc.

Choose a theme

Choosing a theme for your Health Awareness Day helps to promote the event and may increase its appeal. Themes can also narrow the focus of the event.

Themes can be tied to your goals and objectives, specific wellness resources you are promoting, your corporate philosophy, your industry or products, national health observances, the season, current events, etc. Some examples are:

- “Spring into Wellness” and “Fall into Fitness” – seasonal
- “New Year, New You” – January time frame
- “Commit to Your Health” – to highlight Cigna’s disease management programs
- “Back Care” – to focus on lower back care
- “Soaring to New Heights of Health” – for an airline

Get the committee in a creative mood, choose a date for the event (if not done already), and then brainstorm ideas for themes. Write down as many as you can, while holding off on critiquing them. When finished brainstorming, discuss the pros and cons of each. If you aren’t happy with the results, you might open it up to your employees and offer a prize for the winning idea.



Determine your budget

It is important to determine the size of your available budget early in the planning process. One approach is to make a wish list of activities, exhibitors, materials, etc. that you would like to purchase if you had a large enough budget, plus fixed costs like facility fees and furniture rental, then cost it out and present the request to your leadership team. If they approve the full amount, great! If not, trim your plans accordingly.

If you have a **very healthy budget** but not many staffing resources, you can hire a specialized Health Awareness Day provider to plan and execute the entire event for you. Be sure to check potential providers’ references from organizations that have used their services. You might even ask to visit a Health Awareness Day they are coordinating. Be sure to get detailed agreements in writing as to what they will and will not do.

If you have a **moderate-sized budget** you can hire vendors for certain specialized services (e.g., preventive health screenings) and do the rest using your organization’s internal resources, coverage vendors, and free or low-cost community resources.

If you have **little or no budget** you will have to rely heavily on the preceding free resources. However, you may be able to pay for some items out of different budget lines (e.g., printing of materials), and you may be able to get assistance with funding from different internal departments (e.g., Occupational Health, Safety, Security, Human Resources, Training).

Following are some potential expenses that you will need to plan for.

- Communication and promotion (e.g., flyers, posters, home mailings, paycheck stuffers, signs)
- Decorations
- Equipment rental (e.g., tables, tablecloths or skirts, chairs)
- Lunches, snacks, and drinks for vendors and volunteers (and possibly participants)
- Permits or fees for use of facilities
- Vendor fees, where applicable (e.g., healthy cooking demo, preventive health screenings and follow-up coaching)

Choose activities to offer

The activities or content you choose to include in your Health Awareness Day should be based on the objectives you decided on earlier, as well as the budget. It is also advisable to include some fun activities to maximize attendance.

There are three main categories of content.

- Education and awareness – aims to share health-related information
- Demonstrations and activities – to teach health-related skills
- Health screenings – to identify health-risk factors and provide coaching on how to reduce them

Education and awareness

Education and awareness activities are the easiest and least costly to provide, but try to make them as interesting and interactive as possible in order to boost attendance. Following are some examples.

- Aging well tips
- Arthritis self-management
- Back care
- Bicycle safety information
- Boating safety
- Cancer prevention, detection, and treatment
- Childproofing a home
- Dental health
- Disaster preparedness
- Ergonomics
- Exercise and physical activity
- Fire safety
- Hand washing to prevent spread of colds and flu
- Identity theft
- Immunizations (benefits and recommended schedules)
- Information about Cigna wellness resources available to employees and family members (e.g., online Health Assessment, maternity program)
- Men's health issues

- Nutrition (e.g., MyPlate, displays of the amount of fat in different foods, nutrition labels)
- Personal safety from crime
- Poison prevention and first aid
- Prenatal care
- Seatbelt safety
- Sexually transmitted diseases/AIDS
- Skin cancer and sun safety
- Stress management
- Substance abuse prevention
- Tobacco (prevention in children, cessation, dangers of secondhand smoke)
- Women's health issues

Demonstrations and activities

These are usually more involved, more complex to provide and often more expensive than education and awareness activities. Many times you can find providers in the community who will do demonstrations in their area of expertise for free, but other times you will have to pay for these services, or at least pay their expenses.

The value of demonstrations and activities is that they go beyond providing cognitive information, and teach behavioral skills needed to actively participate in healthy new behaviors. By definition, they are usually engaging and interactive. Following are some examples.

- Bicycle safety rodeo
- Chair massage
- CPR
- Exercise techniques and use of equipment (aerobics, strength training, stretching)
- Healthy cooking demonstrations (and tasting)
- Proper lifting techniques
- Relaxation exercises
- Self-defense
- Tooth brushing
- Yoga

Health screenings*

Screenings require professional expertise to perform and often involve costs. However, they provide some of the greatest potential for improving health and lowering health care costs over the long run. Be sure to schedule enough screeners for the volume of participants, to avoid long lines.

One of the biggest challenges when providing screenings is to assure confidentiality of the results. It is very important that you become familiar with and follow HIPAA privacy regulations. Some screenings will need a private room or space, including personal health coaching sessions after the screenings.

Finally, it is critical to have experts explain the implications of the results to participants, along with any recommended next steps for health risk factors that are identified. A great way to do this is to provide a personal health coaching session immediately after the screening. Following are some screenings to consider offering.

- Blood glucose
- Blood pressure
- Body composition
- Body mass index (BMI)
- Bone density
- Cholesterol (total, HDL, LDL)
- Colorectal cancer
- Fitness assessments
- Hearing tests
- Immunizations/flu shots (not actually screenings)
- Mammography
- Skin cancer
- Vision testing

* List reflects possible screenings for consideration. Cigna does not offer all screening types.

Recruit exhibitors

It is critical to contact potential exhibitors at least 3 to 6 months before the event so they can block off their schedules. If you are planning a kickoff event, you may want to secure a keynote speaker too.

You will need to find out if exhibitors have any special needs – equipment, electrical outlets, extra space, etc. One way to get this information is to include a form in your confirmation letter or email for them to fill out and return. It is also important to get, in writing, the details of everyone's expectations about the exhibitor's role in the event.

Send exhibitors who accept your request a confirmation letter or email with the date of the event, time they should arrive and how long they should plan to stay. You might offer them the opportunity to set up the day before. Then send a reminder, with directions, parking, lunch arrangements, etc., about 4 weeks before the event, and perhaps again 1 week before.

Manage logistics

Logistics refers to the myriad details involved in such a complex undertaking. The content for this category is presented in the "Timeline and Checklist for Planning a Health Awareness Day" in Appendix A. Just be aware of the need for a system for tracking and checking off the completion of the many tasks. The appendix is provided to serve that purpose for you.



Promote the event

No matter how well everything else is done, the event can only succeed if the word gets to the target audience in a timely manner and in a way they will respond to. You must run an effective promotional campaign. This is a task for your event committee. Following are some steps in the process.

- Have the committee brainstorm about the best methods or media for getting the message out. (See below for examples.)
- Develop the materials, employing additional paid or volunteer help as needed.
- Create your own personalized event logo and tag line to go with your theme, and include these on all materials to maintain a consistent look.
- Include highlights of the planned event in your communications to pique people's interest; for example, descriptions of activities, exhibitors, giveaways and prizes.
- Create a schedule for these communications to go out. To be most effective, send the message repeatedly, over an extended time period, in different media.
- Enlist senior managers to help get the word out.

Following are some methods to consider for getting your message across to the target audience.

- Email announcements
- Posters in prominent locations
- Paycheck stuffers or home-mailers
- The home page of your intranet site
- Articles in your newsletter
- Announcements in staff meetings and town hall meetings
- Broadcast voice mail messages



Plan for evaluation

It is important to conduct an evaluation after a Health Awareness Day event. The purpose of evaluation is to determine whether or not the event met its goals and objectives, and to guide improvements in future such events – that is, it should tell you which aspects of the planning, promotion, and actual event you should continue, modify, and eliminate, as well as provide ideas for new additions.

There are two sources for feedback – exhibitors and participants. Both have important information to share. Participants should be asked questions such as:

- Their overall impression of the Health Awareness Day
- Their impressions of specific activities and exhibitors
- How they heard about the event (to assess your communication plan)
- What they learned and any changes they plan to make as a result of the event
- Any suggestions for changes or additions at the next event

Exhibitors should be asked about their impressions of:

- How well organized the event was
- The physical facilities
- How many people they reached with their message
- Their suggestions for improvements
- Would they participate again?

Participant evaluations can either be given out at the door as people enter and leave, and collected in a covered box for confidentiality, or they can be emailed to all employees who were included in the promotional campaign, to be returned only by those who attended. To increase the response rate, you can give a prize or incentive to all who respond, or enter names into a drawing for a limited number of higher-value prizes.

Similarly, exhibitor evaluations can be given out in the last half hour of the event and collected in a box, or they can be mailed or emailed immediately following the event.

Appendixes B and C contain sample exhibitor and participant evaluation forms that you can modify to measure the goals and objectives for your own event. Printing exhibitor and participant evaluations on two different colors of paper helps avoid confusion.

Managing the big day

Committee chair:

The role of the committee chair (or other designated person in charge) on the day of the event is to:

- Arrive as early as necessary so that setup can be completed 1 hour before opening time, or even better, set up the day before.
- Oversee the setup process. Direct and instruct volunteers.
- Have a backup plan in case an exhibitor cancels or doesn't show up, materials don't arrive, etc.
- Make sure everything is safe – cords are taped down, exit doors are not blocked, etc.
- Act as master or mistress of ceremonies, or delegate the role, if doing a kickoff event.
- Walk around and monitor activities during the event, tend to any unmet needs, and problem solve as needed.
- Make notes of anything you would change next time.
- Collect evaluations (if done onsite).
- Supervise cleanup and disassembly.
- Debrief volunteers and committee members to get their feedback for future events.

Volunteers:

Volunteer duties which will need to be assigned and supervised include the following.

- Assist with decorations.
- Assist in unloading and carrying in equipment (you may need a dolly or hand truck).
- Set up tables or booths and designate with exhibitors' names.
- Make name tags for exhibitors, volunteers and committee members.

- Greet exhibitors, orient them and show them to their space.
- Greet participants and answer any questions.
- Arrange refreshments and/or lunches and replenish when necessary.
- Take pictures of the event.
- Be a floater who walks around making sure everyone is OK, fills in if someone needs a break, solves problems, etc.
- Clean up and disassemble things after the event.

After the event

The duties of the committee chair (or designee) after the Health Awareness Day are to:

- Send thank-you letters to exhibitors, volunteers and committee members.
- Send evaluation forms to exhibitors and employees if not collected at the event.
- Collect, summarize and analyze the evaluations.
- Write a report that:
 - Gives an overview of the event (activities, exhibitors, approximate number of participants, etc.)
 - Presents the results of the evaluations, plus your own and others' observations
 - Summarizes what went well and not so well, lessons learned, suggestions for what to do differently next time
- Share the report with senior leadership.
- Share appropriate report excerpts and photos with employees to generate interest in future Health Awareness Day events.



Appendix A: Timeline and checklist for planning a Health Awareness Day

6 to 12 months before the Health Awareness Day

- Obtain approval from senior management.
- Form a planning and coordinating committee.
- Select a committee chair and co-chair.
- Establish goals and objectives for the Health Awareness Day, with input from senior management.
- Identify target audience. (Will it include family members?)
- Decide on date and times for the Health Awareness Day.
- Select and reserve a location with sufficient parking, exhibitor space, auxiliary space (e.g., for food and breakrooms for staff), and electrical outlets. Make sure it has sufficient restrooms and drinking water facilities, or arrange to bring them in.
- Select a theme.
- Identify potential activities and exhibitors.
- Determine your available budget and select activities and exhibitors accordingly.

3 to 6 Months before the Health Awareness Day

- Recruit exhibitors and get their commitment to date and times.
- Reserve equipment, including tables and chairs, tablecloths, hand trucks, trash receptacles, etc.
- Recruit volunteers.
- Order educational and promotional materials as needed.
- Plan and begin securing prizes, decorations, "goody bags," giveaways, etc.
- Create posters, flyers, newsletter article, intranet blurb, etc. to promote the event.
- Begin to publicize the event.

1 to 3 Months before the Health Awareness Day

- Meet with event planning committee to review progress and remaining tasks.
- Continue to publicize the event.
- Plan locations for various booths, exhibits, etc.
- Make booth signs.
- Make map of event area for exhibitors and participants.

- Create the program, acknowledging exhibitors, volunteers, donors, etc.
- Print and copy evaluation forms.
- Make a list of items still needing to be purchased.
- Provide written reminder to exhibitors and include the following information:
 - Date of event
 - Time to arrive to set up, hours open to public, ending time
 - Location (include driving directions or map)
 - General guidelines for their role
- Ask exhibitors to bring any special equipment they need, if possible.
- Ask exhibitors about any special requirements that they cannot bring.
- Secure the following supplies for a "be prepared for anything kit".
 - Pens and pencils
 - Felt-tipped markers – large, small, different colors
 - Extension cords
 - Paper clips, rubber bands, thumbtacks, pins
 - Stapler and extra staples
 - Scotch, masking and duct tape
 - Hammer, nails, pliers and screwdriver
 - Posterboard
 - Paper
 - Batteries
 - First aid kit
 - Trash bags
 - Paper towels
 - Kleenex
 - Camera (and film, if not digital) for photographer, extra or freshly charged batteries
 - Phonebook, exhibitor and volunteer lists with phone numbers

1 to 4 Weeks before the Health Awareness Day

- Continue to publicize the event.
- Make exhibitor and volunteer nametags.
- Purchase nonperishable items.
- Make list of volunteer assignments and schedules for the day of the event.
- Have an orientation meeting with volunteers to go over duties and schedules.
- Finalize plan for evaluation, including distribution and collection.

Day before the Health Awareness Day

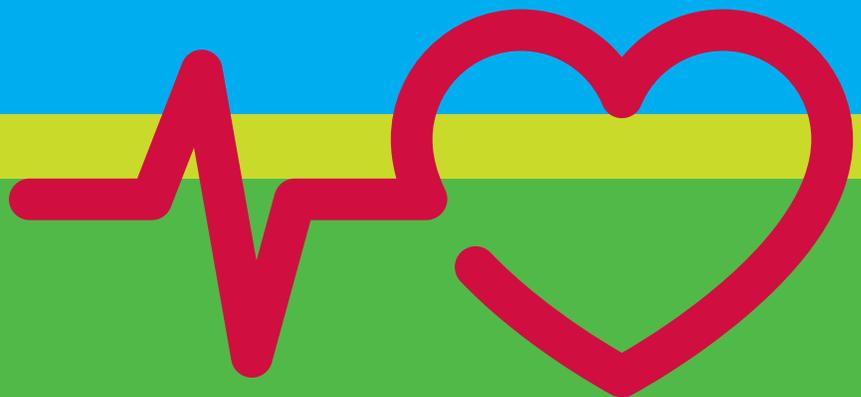
- Purchase perishable food items and store safely.
- Set up tables, booths, exhibits, chairs, classrooms, etc.
- Label the command center table and equip it with the “be prepared for anything kit.”
- Set up reception table, including:
 - Maps of exhibits and activities
 - “Goody bags” for giveaways
 - Assignment list for volunteers
 - Evaluation forms for exhibitors and participants in two different colors (if doing them onsite)
- Set up the food area.
- Make sure there are enough electrical cords, audiovisual equipment, etc.

Day of the event

- Finish setup as needed. Be ready 1 hour before opening.
- Direct volunteers in their duties and reconfirm their schedules.
- Walk around and monitor activities during the event, attend to any unmet needs and problem solve as needed.
- Make notes of anything you would change next time.
- Collect evaluations (if done onsite).
- Estimate attendance.
- Supervise cleanup and disassembly.
- Debrief volunteers and committee members to get their feedback for future events.

After the Health Awareness Day

- Send thank you letters to exhibitors, volunteers, committee members, etc.
- Send out evaluation forms (if not done onsite).
- Tabulate and analyze evaluation results.
- Determine and document possible improvements for next time.
- Report results to senior leadership, and to employees as appropriate.



Appendix B: Sample exhibitor evaluation form

Exhibitor evaluation of Health Awareness Day

Exhibitor organization _____

Your name _____ Phone number _____

1. Please enter an X in the box to rate the following aspects of the Health Awareness Day:

	Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor
Planning				
Attendance				
Management				
Facilities				
Location of booth				
Size of booth				
Other (specify)				

2. Comments or suggestions for improvement:

3. If another Health Awareness Day were held, would you participate? Yes No

4. Please estimate the number of participants you talked with. _____

5. Estimate the number of publications, etc. handed out from your booth, if applicable. _____

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix C: Sample participant evaluation form

Participant evaluation of Health Awareness Day

Your name (optional) _____ Phone no. (optional) _____

Date _____

Thank you for participating in the Health Awareness Day. In order to plan for future events, we would appreciate answers to the following questions.

1. How would you rate the Health Awareness Day in general?

Excellent Good Fair Poor

2. Do you plan to make any changes in your behavior as a result of anything you learned or participated in at the Health Awareness Day, such as taking a class or quitting smoking?

Yes No If yes, please specify. _____

3. How was the information you received at the Health Awareness Day useful? Please check any of the following that apply.

- I do not plan to use the information.
- I plan to read pamphlets for my own benefit.
- I plan to share information with friends, relatives or neighbors.
- I plan to see a doctor.
- I found that I have a health problem I did not know about before.
- I found that someone in my family has a health problem we did not know about before.
- I learned about one or more health improvement resources that I did not know about before.

4. List your favorite exhibitors, booths, activities or speakers. _____

5. How did you hear about the Health Awareness Day? _____

6. I would attend a Health Awareness Day next year: Yes No

7. Topics I would like to see at the next Health Awareness Day. _____

8. Comments and suggestions: _____

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