

Healthy Workplace Snacking

Are You A Squirrel, A Gopher Or A Vulture?

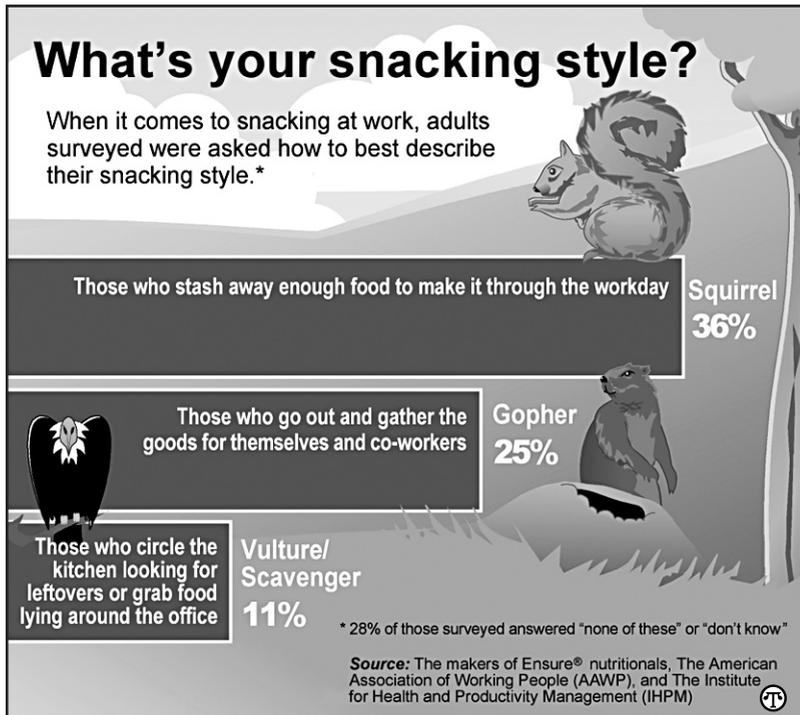
(NAPSA)—When it comes to snacking at work, are you a “squirrel,” “gopher” or “vulture”? A new survey provides a glimpse into America’s snacking styles and habits on the job.

More than one-third (36 percent) of American workers surveyed characterized themselves as “squirrels”—those who stash away enough food to make it through the workday. A quarter called themselves “gophers,” people who go out and gather food for themselves and co-workers. Eleven percent admitted to acting like a “vulture or scavenger,” circling the kitchen or eating area at work looking for leftovers.

The survey, sponsored by the makers of Ensure nutritionals, the American Association of Working People and the Institute for Health and Productivity Management, also found that 89 percent snack at least once every day, with more than half eating less nutritious foods such as chips, candy, cookies or doughnuts.

Hunger was the number one motivator (61 percent) given for workday snacking; the need for energy was cited by more than half of respondents while 23 percent claimed it was stress.

“Snacking during the workday provides the energy we need to keep the wheels in our brains turning effectively—but only if we munch on the right foods,” said Mary Donkersloot, R.D. and author of *Quick and Healthy Eating at Home and On-the-Go*. “No matter how you classify your snacking style or why you snack,



we can all make small changes to improve our overall health and sustain our energy levels at work.”

Five simple suggestions include:

- **Fortify at your desk.** Keep healthy snacks within easy reach, such as carrots or celery sticks, a piece of fruit or a handful of nuts like almonds or walnuts.

- **Stock the fridge.** Load up the office refrigerator or your own portable lunchbag cooler with nutrient-dense, grab-n-go options like yogurt, low-fat mozzarella string cheese, or a nutritional such as Ensure, which is now available in a convenient, reclosable bottle.

- **Make better choices at the vending machine.** Select reduced-fat snacks such as fig bars, low-fat popcorn, pretzels and sugar-free gum. Consider snacks high in nutrient density, but reduced in calories.

- **Graze through the day.** Spread calories out so that you do not go more than four hours without eating. Avoid skipping meals, and eat at least three or four times a day.

- **Walk the talk.** Integrate at least one 10 minute walk into your day for a little exercise and a much needed break.