

Five Surprising Health Effects of Food Insecurity



Lack of access to healthy, nutritious food can have wide-reaching detrimental effects on a person's physical, mental and social well-being. Below are five ways that food insecurity affects health.

1. [Food insecurity can lead to obesity](#). When people are trying to stretch food throughout the month, they typically pick high-calorie fatty foods rather than healthy fruits and vegetables. Fresh foods tend to have a shorter shelf life and can require more preparation. The Food Bank is doing more to make fresh produce more accessible to families through several programs including [Produce to People](#), [Green Grocer](#) and [Recipe Rainbow](#).
2. According to Feeding America's latest survey, [66 percent of the families served by food banks are making the difficult choice between paying for food and paying for medical costs and prescriptions](#).
3. Food insecure seniors are 60 percent more likely than their non-food insecure peers to suffer from depression. [Read more about hunger and mental health](#).
4. Food insecurity has been [linked to anemia, increased hospital visits, anxiety and developmental delays in children](#).
5. [Diabetes is more prevalent in households facing food insecurity](#). Diabetes occurs in 16.1 percent of severely food-insecure households, compared to 7.4 percent of food secure households.

Many programs exist to help alleviate food insecurity, visit [the Food Bank's website](#) to learn more.