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.