

Breaking down barriers

Food insecurity and access to foods that support healthy eating

Fresh and nutritious foods are essential to good health. But for many, eating a healthy diet is not as simple as choosing to do so. There are often conditions beyond their control that limit their access to healthy foods.¹



37.2
million people
live in food-insecure households.²

Did you know?

A healthy diet costs

\$1.48

more per day than an unhealthy one.³

Produce costs



in convenience stores than chain supermarkets and may be the only local grocer.⁴



Access to large supermarkets increases fruit and vegetable intake by **.69 servings per day.**⁵

Children refuse unfamiliar food **8-15 times** leading families to purchase nutrient-poor food to avoid waste.⁶



Five things you can do to help



Ask, don't assume

A patient may not be choosing to not eat nutritiously. Be empathetic and talk to your patient about why a behavior may be happening. Read some **critical thinking questions** that may be helpful to understand how to combat the behavior.



Educate your patients

Talk to them about what may be an unhealthy coping strategy when facing food insecurity, and provide alternatives to those behaviors. Get **tips and information**.



Guide to resources

Remind patients to **call 211** to get connected with human service agencies and community organizations, such as food banks that can provide assistance. Or introduce them to resources such as **Meals on Wheels** or **Aunt Bertha**.



Organize a food drive at your office

Get **helpful tips** to make it a success.



Suggest lower-cost produce options

'Ugly' produce companies sell and deliver lower-cost produce that looks imperfect, but is in otherwise perfect condition.

For more resources visit [CareAllies.com](https://www.careallies.com).

1. <https://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topics-objectives/topic/social-determinants-health/interventions-resources/food-insecurity>
2. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx#insecure>
3. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3855594/>
4. https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/29540244/?from_filter=years.2017-2020&from_linkname=pubmed_pubmed&from_from_uid=28809795&from_pos=7
5. <https://healthychildren.org/English/family-life/Community/Pages/Improving-Access-to-Healthy-Foods.aspx>
6. <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0277953615302331?via%3Dihub>

