

# Food insecurity is often invisible.

Health care providers play a critical role in identifying and addressing food insecurity.

## KEY FACTS ABOUT OLDER ADULT FOOD INSECURITY

### Risk factors for food insecurity among older adults include:

- Low income
- Less educated
- Black or Hispanic
- Separated or divorced, or never married
- Unemployed
- Having a disability
- Living alone
- Living with children or grandchildren

**1 in 10**  
households with  
an older adult 60+  
is food insecure

### Food insecurity among older adults is associated with:

- Poor dietary intake
- Poor/fair health status
- Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Functional limitations
- Depression
- Gum disease
- Cost-related medication under use

## NUTRITION PROGRAMS TO KNOW

The federal nutrition programs play a critical role in improving food security, health, and well-being. Check to see if your patients meet the criteria for any of these programs:

**SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)**

**TEMPORARY EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (TEFAP)**

**COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM (CSFP)**

**CHILD AND ADULT CARE FOOD PROGRAM (CACFP)**

**SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM (SFMNP)**

**HOME-DELIVERED MEALS**

**CONGREGATE MEAL PROGRAM**

### Prepare



**Educate and train** staff on food insecurity and the need for universal screening (i.e., screening all patients)

**Incorporate** food insecurity screening into the institutional workflow

**Show** sensitivity when screening for food insecurity

### Screen



Use the Hunger Vital Sign.™

1. **“Within the past 12 months, we worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.”**  
—often true —sometimes true —never true
2. **“Within the past 12 months, the food we bought just didn’t last and we didn’t have money to get more.”**  
—often true —sometimes true —never true

Patients screen positive for food insecurity if the response is “often true” or “sometimes true” for either or both statements

Document the administration of the screening tool and code the results. Positive screens can be coded as ICD-10-CM Diagnosis Code Z59.4 (lack of adequate food and safe drinking water)

### Intervene



**Administer** appropriate medical interventions per your protocols

**Connect** patients and their families to the federal nutrition programs and other food resources

**Document and track** interventions in medical records

**Support** advocacy and educational efforts to end food insecurity in the U.S.