

FOOD SECURITY FACT SHEET

DEVELOPED BY THE TORONTO COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRES' FOOD SECURITY NETWORK

The Toronto Community Health Centres' Food Security Network identifies food security in terms of 3 factors:

•Food & Health

(food related illness and maintenance of good health)

•Food & Access

(poverty, culturally appropriate, etc.)

•Food & Sustainability

(environment, agriculture, etc.)



Food security is a critical determinant of health



Food insecurity has significant adverse health effects for Canadians.



Food security is:

- Ability to access safe and healthy foods
- Having the money to purchase the foods that you like to eat (i.e. culturally appropriate)
- Growing and producing healthy foods in a way that protects the environment and supports the food producers

Food insecurity is:

- Not having access to the foods you need in order to be healthy
- Not having access to the foods you enjoy (i.e. culturally appropriate)
- Feeling anxiety about not having enough food or being uncertain where the next meal is coming from





The rate of food insecurity in Ontario is 10-14%

Food insecurity results in poor health outcomes for families & children:

- 21.4% of families in Ontario are food insecure
- Food insecure children are twice as likely to have a poor health status
- Food insecure children are 3 times as likely to be hospitalized

Food insecurity is a growing health concern among adults:

- Individuals in food insecure households are more likely to report heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and food allergies
- Household food insecurity is correlated with a higher body mass index (BMI)
- Food deprivation can result in overeating for men and women
- Among individuals with HIV/AIDS, food insecurity is nearly 5 times higher than the general population

The racialization of food insecurity:

- The population that is most affected by food insecurity in Canada are immigrants, Aboriginal people, people of colour, racialized minorities and women
- Whether employed or not, racialized people and immigrants living in Ontario are 3 times more likely to live in poverty and live in food insecure households



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The information contained in this fact sheet was compiled from the Toronto Community Health Centres' Food Security Network literature review titled *We're Hungry! The Truth About Food Security in North America*.

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