



What is Food Security?

People who are **food-secure** are able to buy enough healthy, safe food to meet their nutritional needs at all times during the year. People who are **food-insecure** do not eat at times, because food is either not available or they are not able to afford it.

As a result of BC participants not having enough money to buy food:



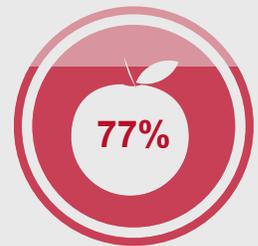
went a day without eating



went hungry



skipped meals



received food supports

Who Experiences Food Insecurity?

A survey of 329 people living with HIV in BC revealed that 72% of them were food-insecure during the previous year. Study participants were **up to six times more likely** to be food-insecure if they...



WERE UNEMPLOYED



HAD INCOMES LESS THAN \$20,000



HAD DIFFICULTY MEETING HOUSING COSTS



MOVED AT LEAST ONCE IN THE LAST YEAR



HAD EVER BEEN TO PRISON



USED SUBSTANCES FOR NON-MEDICINAL PURPOSES



INJECTED DRUGS

Notes: our sample was from community-based AIDS service organizations. Respondents were asked if they had been employed within the past 30 days..

How Does Food Security Affect People Living with HIV?

Food security is a fundamental requirement to lead a healthy life. In BC, people living with HIV who have secure access to food report fewer health issues than those who are food-insecure.

Study participants living with HIV who were food-secure...



Had **78% stronger** immune function



Scored **4% higher** on measures of physical health



Scored **21% higher** on measures of mental health



Scored **16% lower** on measures of stigma



Were **22% more likely** to take medications



Had **70% fewer** symptoms of depression

How Can We Address Food Security?

Food insecurity in BC is affected by a wide range of social and economic factors. Any solution to food insecurity will require a long-term commitment to reducing poverty.



Further research is needed to understand the impact of food insecurity on antiretroviral treatment for people living with HIV



We need to **expand knowledge and awareness** about the importance of nutritional health and food security among people living with HIV



We must **integrate nutrition** and food security assessments and referral systems **into existing HIV and harm reduction interventions**