



## UNDERSTANDING FOOD INSECURITY

Across the United States many families and seniors have experienced a decrease in monthly benefits as SNAP Supplemental benefits ended in February. The reduction in extra allowances for food benefits have effected 16 million Americans. The average reduction is about \$82. However, NPR states some households could see decreases as large as \$250 monthly.

The decreases in SNAP's monthly extra supplements is happening at a time when grocery bills are averaging 11.3% higher than previous years. Becky Sullivan writes in the 2023 NPR article, "More than 80% of SNAP beneficiaries are working families, people with disabilities or elderly people, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, which operates the program. About two-thirds of SNAP households include children."

The foundation for SNAP originated in 1933 as part of the Agricultural Adjustment Act. The current form abbreviated SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) has about 116,000 West Virginians utilizing the program.

Move for Hunger explains, "In the United States, more than 34 million people are food insecure, with 1 in 8 children going hungry every day. On average, the monthly SNAP benefit is \$129 per household member."

During the pandemic, a family of four saw an increase which totaled to \$1495 as maximum benefits . Since the pandemic ending, benefits began seeing a return to pre-COVID issuance. These cutbacks appear at a time when 1 in 4 households are experiencing food insecurity across the United States.

Not having access to fresh foods can lead to potentially dangerous health results. The main results of lack of access to fresh food can be long term chronic diseases. The American Heart Association describes food insecurity as not the same as hunger.

In the longer term, nutrition expert Colleen Spees states for American Heart Article how "when you're not getting adequate nutrients to your brain and muscles and organs over time, we see the ill effects. We see nutrition-related chronic disease and multiple (other medical conditions), because very few people have just one disease."

## EMO MARCH NEWS 2023

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[Emohealth.org](http://Emohealth.org)

**March is:**

-- Colorectal Cancer Awareness

-- Kidney Disease Awareness

-- Traumatic Brain Injury Month

### PROGRAM NEWS AND HIGHLIGHTS:

- Food Insecurity
- Colon Screening
- Garden Growing
- Farmacy Enrolling
- Outreach Events

**EMO appreciates your donations. If you would like to discuss donating today, call us at 304-529-0753.**

**You can donate at [emohealth.org](http://emohealth.org) by clicking the donate button!**



Food insecurity can lead to cardiovascular disease, hypertension, and diabetes as well as cancer. The lack of nutrients combined with irregular food access also contributes to obesity.

The American Heart Association states, "Fewer options can mean higher risk. When families don't have enough money, they get stuck with the cheapest options to keep their kids' bellies full. Unfortunately, these options are also usually the least healthful."



## NATIONAL COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS

March is National Colorectal Cancer Awareness and is a reminder to practice preventative screening all year.

Guidelines for screenings should include:

- 45 years or older (screenings can stop at 85)
- Previous diagnosis
- History of inflammatory bowel disease (ulcerative colitis or Crohn's disease)

There are multiple tests to determine if a colonoscopy is needed. These tests are:

- Fecal immunochemical test (FIT)
- Cologuard
- guaiac-based fecal occult blood test

These tests help determine if a colonoscopy is needed to further detect colorectal cancer. Stool and blood tests can be performed every year, or with Cologuard every three years. Colonoscopies should be done every 10 years, unless a previous diagnosis has been given.

## PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS:

**Unity Garden:** Residents will notice many upgrades to the Unity Garden. This past month, the garden saw new construction which included a fence, shed, compost bins, and rain barrels. In addition, four new beds were built. We sincerely thank our partners, Pallotine Foundation of Huntington and Unlimited Future, for their help in building the Unity Garden.

**FARMACY Enrollment:** The Farmacy 2023 program is beginning to enroll patients! Farmacy is a statewide prescription to wellness program to help combat chronic diseases. Ebenezer Medical Outreach Inc. patients receive weekly nutrition lessons and are able to pick produce from farmer's market styled giveaway. Healthy recipes are shared adding an introduction to help patients make long term lifestyle changes. Introducing access to fresh food along with educational components can help reduce hypertension, diabetes, and obesity. To enroll in Farmacy 2023, EMO patients can call 304-529-0753.

**Come Visit EMO:** Ebenezer Medical Outreach Inc. is gearing up to go outdoors. They will be at Stinkfest this year, and are planning many more activities to access free giveaways and healthy information. Be sure to watch their Facebook page for upcoming events.