

Summary of USPSTF Draft Recommendation

Screening for Food Insecurity

June 2024



What is this draft recommendation about?

This recommendation focuses on screening for food insecurity. **Food insecurity** means having limited or uncertain access to nutritious food, mostly due to a lack of financial and other resources.

There are a variety of questionnaires available to **screen** for food insecurity, including those that look at food insecurity alone and those that include other **social risk factors** such as housing instability, transportation problems, and need for help with utilities.



What does the USPSTF recommend?



The USPSTF concludes that the current evidence is insufficient to assess the balance of benefits and harms of screening for food insecurity on health outcomes in the primary care setting.

So, what does that mean?

There is not enough evidence to decide whether or not screening for food insecurity improves overall health.



Who is this draft recommendation for?

This recommendation applies to children, adolescents, and adults.



Why is this draft recommendation and topic important?

- Food insecurity greatly impacts the health of children and adults across the United States. Over 10 percent of U.S. households experience food insecurity.
- Certain populations, such as Black, Hispanic, and Native American/Alaska Native people; LGBT people; older adults; individuals with disabilities; and veterans are at higher risk for food insecurity. These groups face issues such as systemic racism, social inequities, and discrimination that lead to higher rates of low income, a main cause of food insecurity.
- Importantly, this I statement is only related to screening and interventions resulting from screening for food insecurity in the primary care setting. The Task Force did not review the evidence on, and is not making a statement on, the use of valuable social services and community programs that set out to address food insecurity.

Screening for Food Insecurity



What are the benefits?

There is limited evidence on whether or not screening and supplementation for food insecurity in the primary care setting improves health outcomes.



What are the harms?

There is limited evidence on the harms of screening for food insecurity.



Where can I learn more?

Food Assistance Programs (USDA)

Nutrition (MedlinePlus)

[nutrition.gov](https://www.nutrition.gov) (USDA)



How can I comment?

Visit the USPSTF [website](https://www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org) to read the full draft recommendation and submit a comment.



The Task Force welcomes comments on this draft recommendation.



Comments must be received from June 25, 2024, to July 22, 2024.



All comments will be considered as the Task Force finalizes the recommendation.