

Food Security Fact Sheet: Québec

The Impact of Food Security on Health Outcomes in People Living with HIV/AIDS

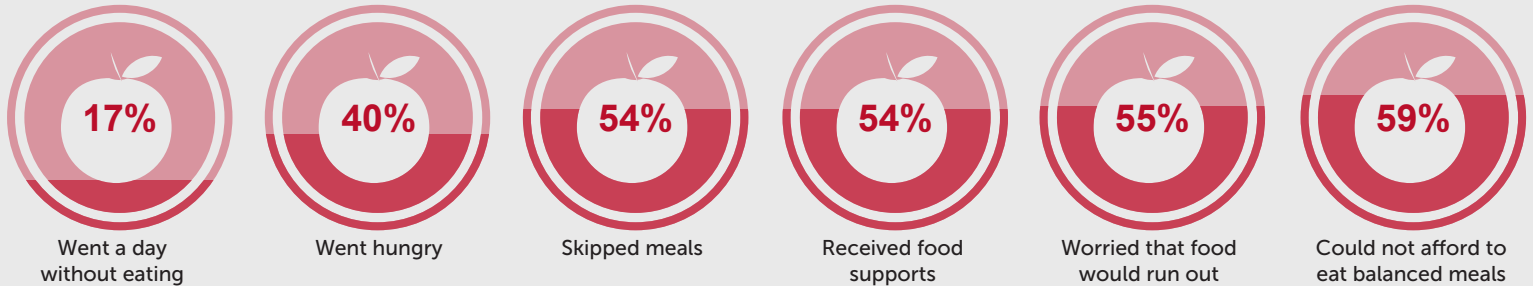


What is Food Security?

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.

In Québec, people living with HIV are **up to seven times more likely** to be food insecure, compared to the general population[†].

Among participants in the study[‡]:



Who Experiences Food Insecurity?

People living with HIV in Québec are **up to six times more likely** to be food insecure if they...



A survey of 319 people living with HIV who visit community-based HIV/AIDS organizations in Québec revealed that **58%** of them were food insecure during the previous year[‡].

[†] Institut national de santé publique du Québec (2014) L'insécurité alimentaire dans les ménages québécois : mise à jour et évolution de 2005 à 2012. [‡] Data is taken from a sample of HIV-positive members of community-based HIV/AIDS organizations in Québec between 2012-2013.



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How Does Food Security Affect People Living with HIV?

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

For example, people living with HIV who are food secure:



Experience **47%** fewer HIV symptoms



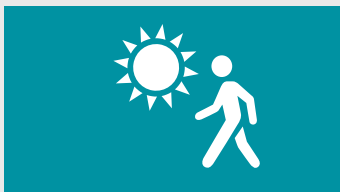
Are **62%** more likely to take their HIV medications as prescribed



Are **2.5x** less likely to be followed by a mental health professional



Visit emergency departments **1.7x** less often



Report **3x** fewer depressive symptoms



Are **13%** less likely to feel stigmatized due to their HIV status

How Can We Address Food Security?

Food security in Québec 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.



We must **develop holistic programs** that address the underlying causes of food insecurity, rather than tackling food insecurity alone.



We must **build stronger, broader community partnerships** and develop the capacity within our communities to improve living conditions and increase access to employment for people living with HIV.

