

Now that all Canadians are feeling the pressure of higher food costs it is more important than ever to address the issue of food insecurity in people with diabetes.

As defined by the Government of Canada (1), food insecurity is the inability to acquire or consume an adequate diet quality or sufficient quantity of food in socially acceptable ways, or the uncertainty that one will be able to do so.

Sufficient nutritious food is essential for healthy living, and is particularly important for people at risk for, or living with diabetes. Diet, along with physical activity is key to the management of diabetes. Insufficient nutrients or an irregular or inadequate intake makes diabetes management more difficult, especially for people prescribed diabetes medication. For example, inadequate, or irregular food intake can precipitate hypoglycemia and overconsumption, over time, might even contribute to the onset of some forms of diabetes (2).

Obtaining adequate nutritious food is more difficult for those managing diabetes on a low income. What advice can nurses provide to their patients with diabetes?

Some suggestions for nurses caring for people with diabetes include taking advantage of specials, shop at lower cost stores, discount stores, partner with family members or friends to buy in bulk (3).

1. <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/food-nutrition/food-nutrition-surveillance/health-nutrition-surveys/canadian-community-health-survey-cchs/household-food-insecurity-canada-overview.html>
2. <https://www.utoronto.ca/news/u-t-study-finds-food-insecurity-more-doubles-risk-developing-type-2-diabetes>
3. <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/eating-healthy-is-hard-it-s-even-harder-for-people-who-can-barely-afford-to-eat-at-all-1.6858101>
4. <https://newsroom.heart.org/news/free-weekly-produce-delivery-improved-blood-sugar-food-security-in-low-income-adults>