Healthy Eating Impacted by Food Insecurity

Various resources available to address the issues.



Breakfast is the most important meal of the day. To start the day off with a well-balanced meal is said to the be the one way you can ensure that you have all that you need to fuel your day and gear up for success.

But what is a healthy well-balanced meal? And does everyone get the essentials that they need for that most important meal? It might surprise you to learn that what the masses have been taught about what is healthy and balanced may not truly be the way to get what it is you need to fuel your day.

For many years, the United States has followed the guideline of the food pyramid provided by the USDA, posters adorned walls and teachers taught children that this was the way to ensure that you are maintaining good health.

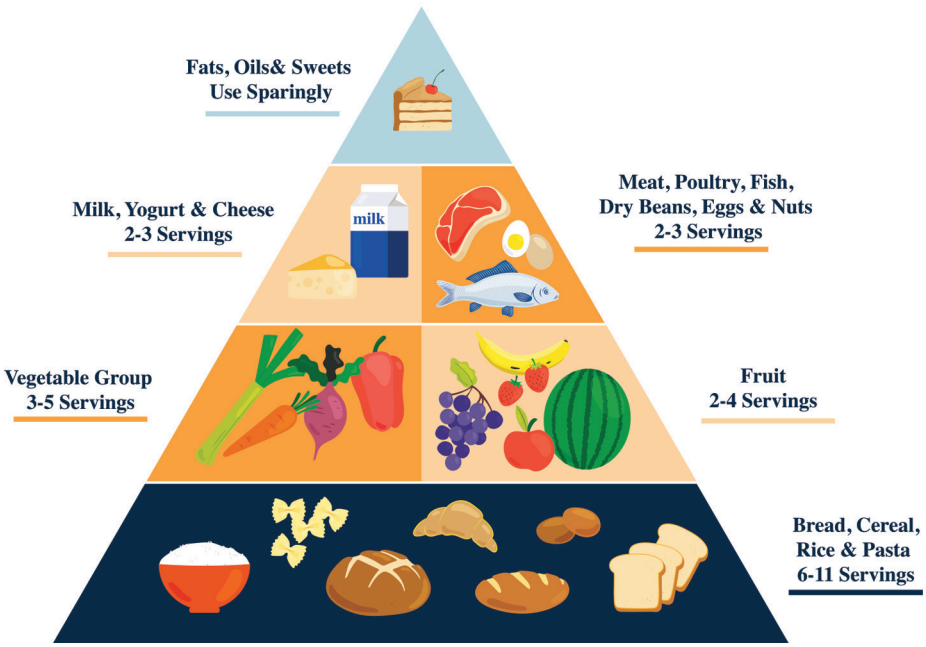
Recently, though, the food pyramid has been replaced with the MyPlate graphic, giving Americans a new way to look at the foods that they are eating and the amount they should be eating per meal.

Harvard's Healthy Eating Plate provides still a better way to ensure that you are eating the actual proper amount of your fruits, vegetables, grains, healthy proteins, water and oils. If you follow the guidelines given by Harvard Healthy Eating Plate and/or the USDA's

How does one make sure that they are eating the right amounts of each of the components of a healthy meal, especially when food insecurity exists?

What is food insecurity? Food insecurity is when people have no real idea of where their next meal will be coming from. It is something plagues much of America, especially college students.

According to a study by the California State University Chancellor's Office, 41.6% of all CSU students reported food insecurity one or more times in a 12-month period.





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With the global pandemic known as COVID-19, food insecurity has become a major issue facing so many today. So how can you have breakfast if you don't know where your next meal is coming from?

For many years there have been food banks that have given food out to those in need, but it has been a source of shame for most. Feeling as though there are others who are worse off than they are, or are too ashamed to ask for help, people often do not even know that there are places that can help them out, even if it's just a little bit.

Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County is just one of those many places. Currently run by California State University, Fullerton alumna Claudia Keller, the food bank has been helping families in need and struggling with insecurities for many years.

When Keller took on the role of chief mission officer, she couldn't have imagined that she would have so many families in need in such a short amount of time. She understands the need for a place like Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County, and for people to not be ashamed to ask for help.

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A lot of people depend on us for the food that they eat every day," said Keller. "That's really what drive us to make sure that we don't close down."

> ***"I always had to think about how to budget my money really well, so I tended to buy food that was cheaper, I didn't think about how healthy it was."***

Keller isn't the only one in Orange County who is making an impact in the way of food insecurity. In 2019, Cal State Fullerton's first permanent food pantry was given the go ahead. Attempting to provide a variety of nutritious foods for the students at the university without judgment or shame.

Katy Carrillo spoke about not being able to afford nutritious food during her time in college.

"I always had to think about how to budget my money really well, so I tended to buy food that was cheaper, I didn't think about how healthy it was." said Carrillo. "I didn't eat much protein or vegetables. I bought a lot of snacks, chips and things that weren't really good for me."

College students across the nation will have these same issues, no matter what school they attend. The food that is nutritious for you is often more expensive and the less expensive food is often not nutritious at all. This is a type of food insecurity that many face on a daily basis, and if they are facing this insecurity, how can they have a proper nutritious breakfast, the most important meal of the day?

Organizations and universities, such as Cal State Fullerton, are helping to address the issue of food insecurity in their communities. This is a welcome sign, even before these trying times.

Remember that if you are experiencing any kind of food insecurity or need any help you can reach out to the many food banks across both Orange and Los Angeles Counties.

There is no shame in asking for help, especially during a pandemic. And if you are a student at Cal State Fullerton, please visit

http://www.fullerton.edu/deanofstudents/basic_needs/

for more information on Tuffy's Basic Needs or to fill out a needs request form.

For more information on Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County visit www.feedoc.org.

