Assessing Food Insecurity in the WHI

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Food Insecurity and Older Adults: What?

• “Limited or uncertain ability to acquire nutritionally adequate and safe foods in socially acceptable ways”

• Affects 2.5 million (8.4%) of households with older adults in 2011

• Increasing prevalence; since 2007-2010 recession, # affected has increased by 34%

• Differences in prevalence by gender (> female-headed households) and location (>rural)

• Complex, multidimensional

  - Financial constraints
  - Physical limitations
  - Poor health
  - Lack social support

Food Insecurity
Food Insecurity and Older Adults: So What?

- Validated measures exist, including 6- and 2-item measures
- Extant literature focuses on younger populations and inconsistent across age, gender, and race-ethnic groups
- Most currently available national datasets do not provide food insecurity and healthcare cost information

Health care cost?
Food Insecurity and Older Adults: Now What?

- Relevant to topics addressed by multiple SIGs and across clinical disease states
- Effective interventions (at least in short term) exist
- Clear policy implications
- Unique opportunity to understand relationships between food insecurity and outcomes in WHI (including WHI-Medicare linkage).

Interested??