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# Research Week 2024

## The Cost of Healthy Eating

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### Keywords

SNAP Program, Food Stamps Income, Heart Failure Friendly Diet, AAHFN Cookbook

### Abstract

#### Background

Each year in the United States, 15-20% of 1 million visits to the Emergency Department for Acute Heart Failure result in direct home discharge, with patients often experiencing adverse health outcomes within 30 days after discharge. The multi-centered dissemination and implementation study, “Get With the Guidelines in Emergency Department Patients With Heart Failure” (GUIDED-HF), utilized ‘Self-Care Coaches’ who reach out to participants via telehealth calls to discuss potential improvements in their self-care maintenance after discharge as a strategy to mitigate adverse health outcomes; and offer provisions of resources, including a cookbook, “Don’t Pass the Salt!”, created by the American Association for Heart Failure Nurses (AAHFN).

During these calls, we observed gaps in self-care for retired older adults (62+), living alone, and receiving food stamps from the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), who expressed struggles with affording a Heart Failure (HF) friendly diet.

#### Objective

To investigate if the target population in Portland or Hillsboro can afford an HF-friendly diet on the monthly SNAP income.

Using the cookbook, we created 3 sets of meal plans, using (1) randomly-selected, (2) least-expensive, and (3) most-expensive meals to assess the range of possible options. Utilizing the Fred Meyer website, the cost of ingredients for each meal was collected and aggregated to determine meal plan costs.

## Results

The SNAP maximum monthly allotment for a one-person household is \$291. In Portland, the cost of randomly-selected, least-expensive, and most-expensive meal plans was \$1,679.10, \$498.90, and \$3,927.90, respectively. In Hillsboro, the equivalent meal plans cost \$1,676.10, \$495.90, and \$3,924.90, respectively.

## Conclusion

We found all meal plans exceeded the SNAP maximum monthly allotment. However, we assumed that full-sized items were purchased, likely overestimating the cost of ingredients. Further investigation is needed to weigh the affordability of healthy eating against economic realities for retired, older adults with HF.