

Barriers and Facilitators of Healthy Eating among Latinx Women: A Longitudinal Food Box Pilot Study

Yessica Martinez Mulet, Abel Gonzalez, and Lila C. Mack, Patricia Rodriguez Espinosa, Hector Romero, Wei-ting Chen, Michelle Houser, Maya R. Murthy, Jason Wong, Liz David, Rakhi Singh & Lisa Goldman Rosas

Intro

- Food box insecurity is a prevalent problem in low-income Latinx households.
- Provision of healthy foods (by food boxes, produce prescription or other forms) is often used to address food insecurity.
- Covid-19 has exacerbated food insecurity, from 11% of households (2018) to 23% (2020).

Aims

- Explore impact of healthy food items on diet behaviors.
- Understand barriers and facilitators for optimal utilization of food items.
- Test and improve ability to collaborate with safety net clinics, food banks, and volunteer organizations to provide nutritional assistance during Covid-19.

Methods

- Samaritan House and Fair Oaks Health Center recruited Latinxs females with BMI ≥ 30
- Participants received food boxes for 8 weeks.
- Research team conducted qualitative interviews at 4 and 8 weeks.
- Participants completed 2 short surveys (<10 minutes) at baseline and at 8 weeks.
- Interviews were analyzed using NVivo coding software.

Community Partners

- Samaritan House
- Fair Oaks Health Center
- Second Harvest Food Bank
- Peninsula Food Runners

Food boxes are useful tools for addressing *food insecurity*. Provision of food boxes offers *monetary and stress relief* and *integration of new healthy food* items into families' diets.



Results

- Barriers
 - Transportation poses a significant challenge in accessing food, both as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic and being a non-driver.
 - Cost of healthy food items forces families to make a choice among necessities and frequently acts as a barrier.
- Benefits
 - Direct delivery of food boxes facilitate access to healthy foods without incurring additional spending or requiring participants to travel.
- Suggestions for improvement
 - Provide recipes to facilitate the use of new food items and the integration of these into daily diets.

Discussion

- Community partnerships are both useful and necessary in addressing food insecurity.
- Future work seeking to address food security should focus on creating culturally and linguistically competent interventions (e.g., nutrition education and support) that lead to lifestyle changes.
- Low-income Latinx families have unmet needs extending beyond food insecurity.

