

# Food Plus Health

## Pairing Food With Medical Care



Food insecurity isn't an isolated issue. Beyond nutritious food, our neighbors experiencing hunger often need additional resources to overcome the obstacles they face. These challenges can include health problems caused by an inadequate diet.

### Good Food Can Help Create Good Health

To better support our clients, the Capital Area Food Bank is exploring ways to use "food as medicine" by integrating food into clinical settings through our Food Plus Health programs. By bringing medically tailored food directly into doctor's offices and hospitals, we're able to assist people across our region with managing or preventing diet-related illnesses.

Customizing food to the dietary needs of specific populations—and making that food available directly at the point of care—can remove time and cost barriers for patients in need of nutritious groceries, and help improve results from health services. This supports long-term well-being for individuals and families while addressing food insecurity and health disparities in some of our region's highest need communities. Better health, in turn, can also aid learning, concentration, and productivity—all of which can enable brighter futures for our neighbors.



### Our Food Plus Health Programs



#### Food Pharmacy Program:

One of the primary models that the food bank is using to pair food with medical care is known as a "food pharmacy." If a patient screens positive for food insecurity, they receive a "prescription" for groceries from the food pharmacy.

The food bank has put this model into operation through a partnership with the Diabetes Care Clinic at Children's National Hospital, which provides patients and their families with shelf-stable groceries, fresh produce and recipe cards.



#### Healthy Moms, Healthy Babies:

In communities where there are high rates of birth complications, low birth weights, and elevated infant and maternal mortality rates, we're partnering with healthcare providers to give new mothers groceries at their prenatal visits. New moms also receive groceries during perinatal visits for the first three months of their baby's life.



#### Help for Stroke Patients:

People who have experienced a stroke are often homebound and cannot access the food they need to both heal and stay healthy. Our program for stroke patients home-delivers groceries that are tailored to a patient's dietary needs. Through nutritious food and quality healthcare from our partners, this pilot is designed to help participants decrease their blood pressure, reduce doctor visits, reduce the likelihood of being readmitted to a hospital, and improve overall health.

To learn more about the Capital Area Food Bank, please visit:

[capitalareafoodbank.org](https://capitalareafoodbank.org)

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