Household food insecurity is when a household worries about or lacks the financial means to buy healthy, safe, personally acceptable food.

Evidence shows that food insecure families struggle to afford a healthy diet and experience greater health and social challenges compared to people who are food secure.

Rates of food insecurity

13% of households in Island Health experience food insecurity.
LEVELS OF FOOD INSECURITY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Burnt Columbia</th>
<th>Island Health</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MARGINAL</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MODERATE</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SEVERE</td>
<td>4%</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

MARGINALLY FOOD INSECURE: Worry about running out of food and/or limit food selection because of lack of money for food.

MODERATELY FOOD INSECURE: Compromise in quality and/or quantity of food due to a lack of money for food.

SEVERELY FOOD INSECURE: Miss meals, reduce food intake and at most extreme go day(s) without food due to a lack of money for food.

SOCIAL ASSISTANCE & FOOD INSECURITY

82% of households on social assistance in Island Health experience food insecurity

BC AVERAGE: 76%

Food Insecure

Food Secure

FOOD INSECURITY in HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN vs. WITHOUT CHILDREN

BC AVERAGE: 15%

21% WITH CHILDREN ARE FOOD INSECURE

BC AVERAGE: 11%

11% WITHOUT CHILDREN ARE FOOD INSECURE
1 in 10 households (12%) experience food insecurity

1 in 6 children live in food insecure households

1 in 6 households experience food insecurity

The majority are employed

65% Employed

15% Social Assistance

20% Other

The majority are single people

43% Single people

34% People with kids (0-18+)

22% Couples without kids

1% Other

Household composition & rates of food insecurity

Rates of food insecurity are more than 5x higher for single mothers with kids compared to couples without kids.
CONCLUSION

Food insecurity is a public health issue that influences physical and mental health across the lifespan. A recent study shows that people who are food insecure use up to 121% more healthcare dollars compared to those who are food secure, demonstrating that reducing food insecurity could offset considerable public expenditures in healthcare.

The root cause of household food insecurity is lack of income. Policy interventions at the provincial or federal level that address household income can make a significant difference to improve food insecurity.

For more information, including a provincial infographic and the full report, visit www.phsa.ca/populationhealth