



# Addressing Food Insecurity and Nutrition-Related Disease Among Medicaid HCBS Beneficiaries During COVID

2021 HCBS Technical Assistance Series January 14, 2021 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET



#### **PRESENTERS**

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## Nutritional Modulation of Immune Function



## Simin Nikbin Meydani, DVM, PhD

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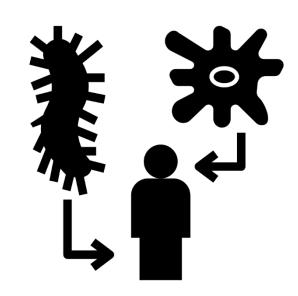


## path-o-gen

/'paTHəjən,'paTHə\_jen/

### noun:

a bacterium, virus, or other microorganism that can cause disease



# Immune vs. Inflammatory Response

pathogen

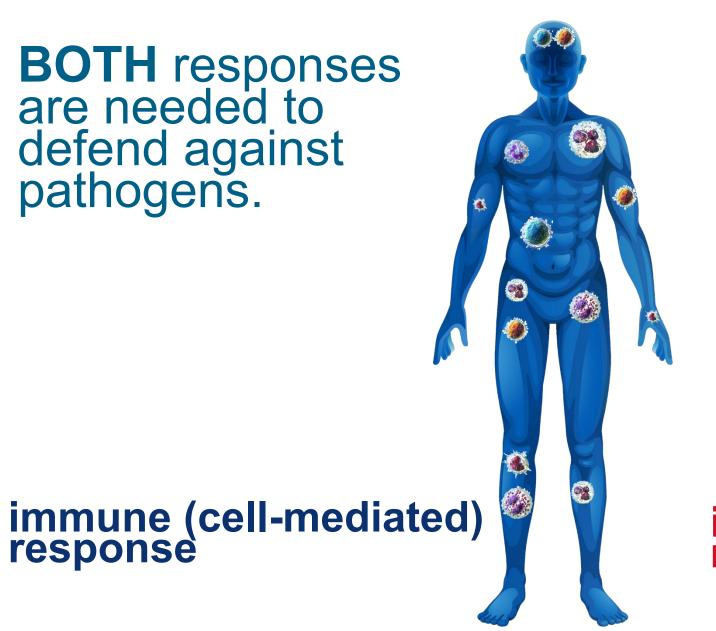
humoral immunity (antibody production)

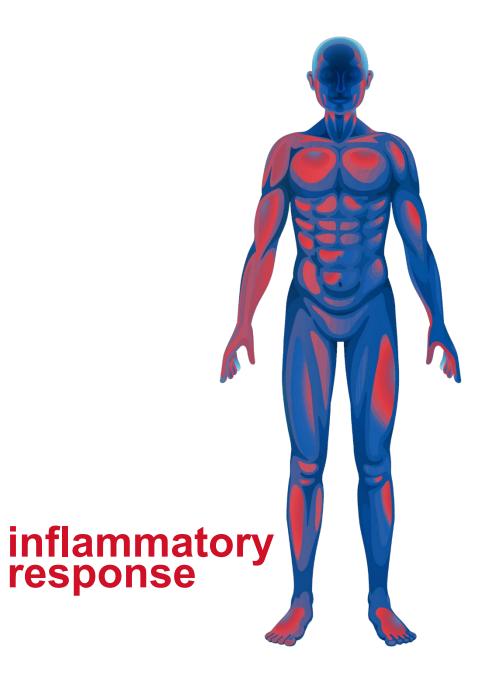
cellular Immunity (direct killing)

inflammatory cytokines, lipids, & free radicals

cell damage

**BOTH** responses are needed to defend against pathogens.





Underperforming cell-mediated response can result in disease



## Infection

**Autoimmune diseases** 

Cancer

**Arthritis** 

Hyporeactive immune response

Uncontrolled chronic inflammatory response can result in disease.



Alzheimer's disease

**Neurological diseases** 

Cardiovascular diseases

**Pulmonary diseases** 

**Autoimmune diseases** 

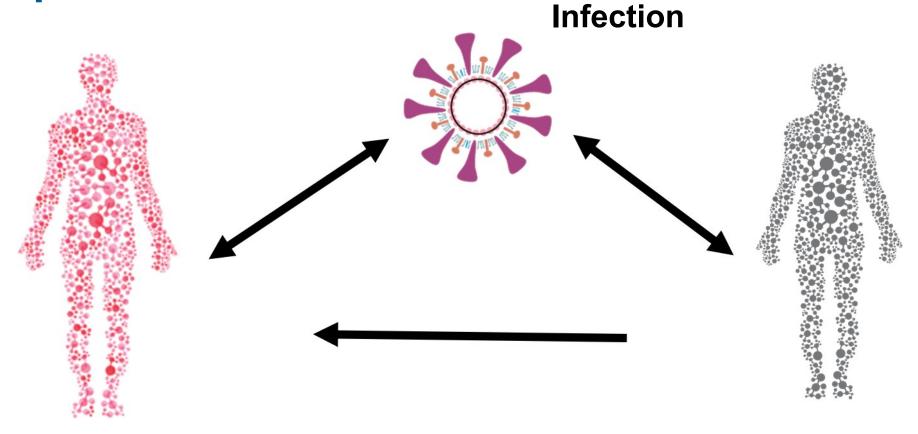
Cancer

**Arthritis** 

**Diabetes** 

Overactive inflammatory response

## **Nutrition-Host Defense-Infection: A Complex Interaction**



Impaired immune response

Uncontrolled inflammation

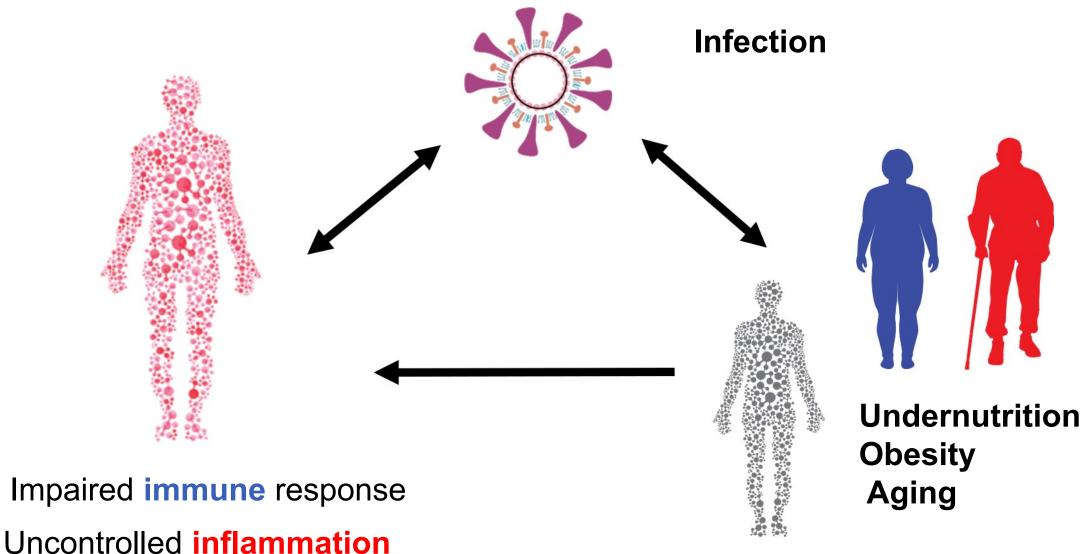
**Undernutrition** 

## 1 in 3

of the global population is suffering from hidden hunger and its related conditions because of insufficient micronutrients.



## **Nutrition-Host Defense-Infection: A Complex Interaction Cont.**



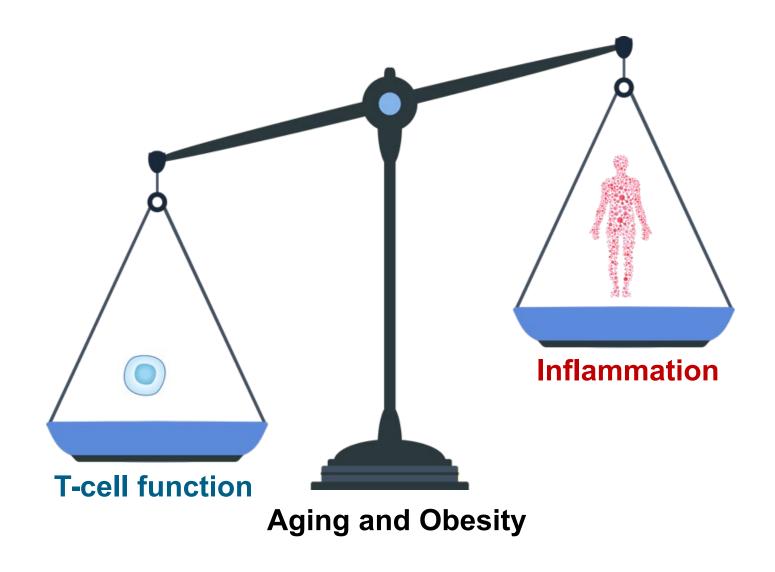
13% of the global population is obese.

8.5% of the global population is over the age of 65.



Source: WHO

## Aging and Obesity are Associated with Dysregulated Immune and Inflammatory Responses



## **How Does Nutrition Affect Infection?**

## Changes risk for acquiring infection

- Pathogen entry
- \* Regulates cell-mediated immune response
- Vaccine efficacy

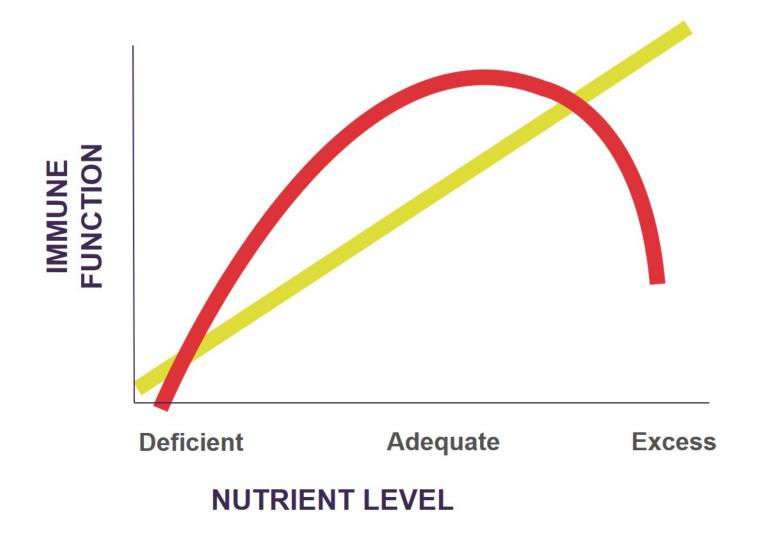
Changes morbidity by regulating oxidative stress and inflammation

Reduces pathogen virulence

Impacts the microbiome



## **How Does Nutrition Affect Infection? Cont.**





## Vitamin E



## **Vitamin E and Immune Response**

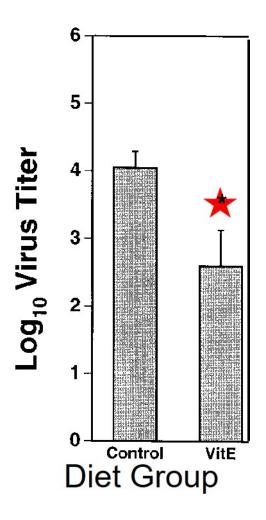
Vitamin E supplementation of healthy elderly significantly improves in vivo and in vitro indices of T cell-mediated function.

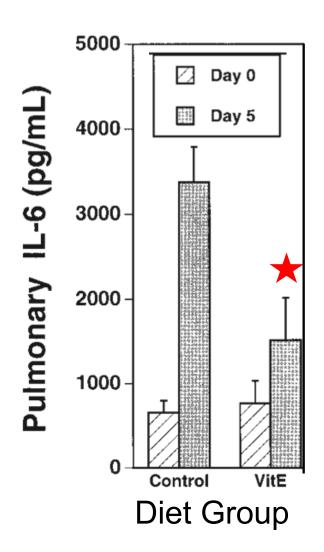
Meydani et al. AJCN 1990; 52:557-563 Meydani et al. JAMA 1997; 277:1380-1386. Pallast et al. AJCN 69: 1273-1281,1999. De la Fuente M, et al. Free Radic Res, 2008.

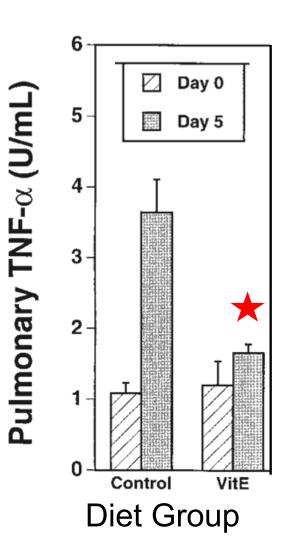
## Optimal Vitamin E Dose for Improving Cell-mediated Immune Response in Elderly

Group	Change in antibody response to hepatitis B (U/ml)	%Change in DTH diameter of induration
Placebo	3.3	18
Vitamin E (60 IU)	6.4	42
Vitamin E (800 IU)	5.2	50

## Vitamin E Reduces Influenza Infection As Well As Inflammatory Response to It







## **Experimental Design**

**Design:** Double-Blind, Placebo-Controlled, Randomized

**Duration:** 1 year

Treatment: 200 IU/Day Vitamin E or Placebo

Subject: 617 Male and female, nursing home residents >65 years

old

Outcome: Respiratory Infection

## Vitamin E Reduces the Risk of Acquiring Respiratory Infections

% risk reduct	
All respiratory infections	35%
Upper respiratory infections	38%
Common cold	37%

Meydani et al. JAMA, 292:828-836, 2004.

## **Zinc**



## Who is at Risk of Zinc Deficiency?

- Children age 1-3 years
- Adolescent females age 12-19 years
- Older adults age > 71 years

Briefel et al. J. Nutr. 130: 1367s, 2000

## A significant portion of older Americans have low serum zinc levels.

Low serum zinc levels (<70 mg/dl) observed in:

- 30% nursing home residents
- 22% independently living elderly

(Meydani et al. AJCN, 2007) (Colman et al. Unpub. Data)

# Meydani et al. AJCN, 2007

# Low Serum Zinc Levels in Elderly Nursing Home Residents is Associated with Higher Incidence of Pneumonia

	Final Serum Zinc Groups		
Pneumonia	≥70ug/dl (n=310)	<70ug/dl (n=110)	p-value
Incidence (# per person-yr)	0.25	0.46	<0.001
Duration (Days per person-yr)	3.19	6.82	0.001
Antibiotic prescriptions (# per person-yr)	0.26	0.48	<0.001
Duration of antibiotic use (Days per person-yr)	2.50	4.85	0.004

## Zinc Supplementation Improved Immune Response in Nursing Home Elderly Residents

Supplementation of zinc-deficient nursing home elderly with 30 mg/day Zn for 3 months significantly increased serum zinc levels and improves T cell function.

## Zinc for the Treatment of the Common Cold: a Systematic Review and Meta-analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials

Several studies that had looked at zinc and common cold found oral zinc may shorten the duration of symptoms of the common cold.

## **Vitamin D**

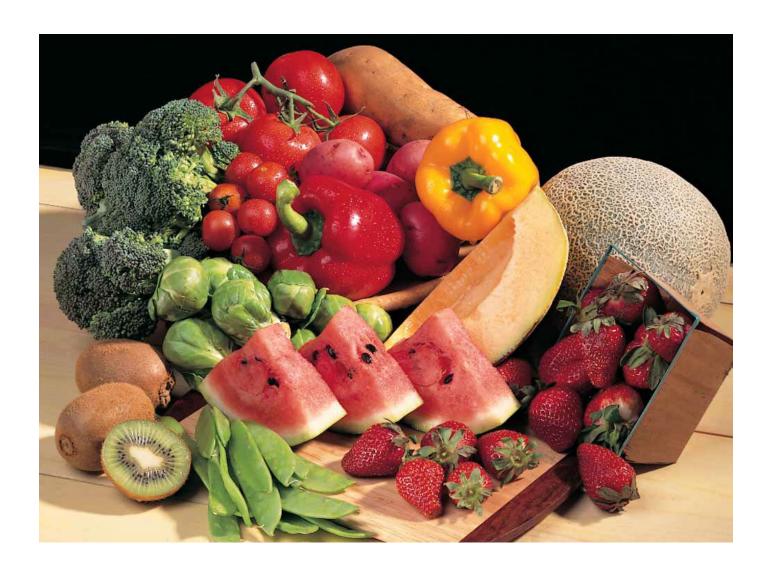


## Vitamin D and Immune Response

- Vitamin D increases the expression of antibacterial proteins.
- Vitamin D limits certain aspects of the acquired immune response, playing a protective role and potentially reducing the risk of autoimmune disease and tissue transplant rejection.
- Low serum 25-hydroxyvitamin D<sub>3</sub> is linked to a higher risk of upper respiratory tract infections; although there is controversy.



## Vitamin C



## Vitamin C and Immune Response

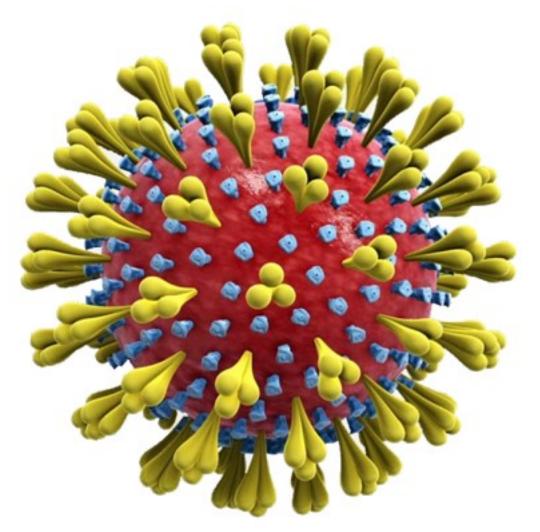
- Immune cells accumulate and concentrate vitamin C and then quickly use it up during an active immune response.
- The scientific evidence regarding the effect of vitamin C supplementation on immune function is hampered by several methodological shortcomings.



## Vitamin C and Infection

- Important considerations for research studies on vitamin C and infections include:
  - the baseline vitamin C status of the study population.
     Beneficial effect of vitamin C supplementation may occur only in those with low vitamin C status.
  - Factors such as physical stress, oxidative stress, smoking, and disease may increase demand for vitamin C.
- At this time, the scientific evidence is insufficient to advocate vitamin C supplementation in the prevention of pneumonia in the general population.
- Results on effect of vitamin C supplements and common cold is not conclusive.





## **HUMAN CORONAVIRUS**

#### Mild/Moderate

229E

NL63

OC43

HKU1

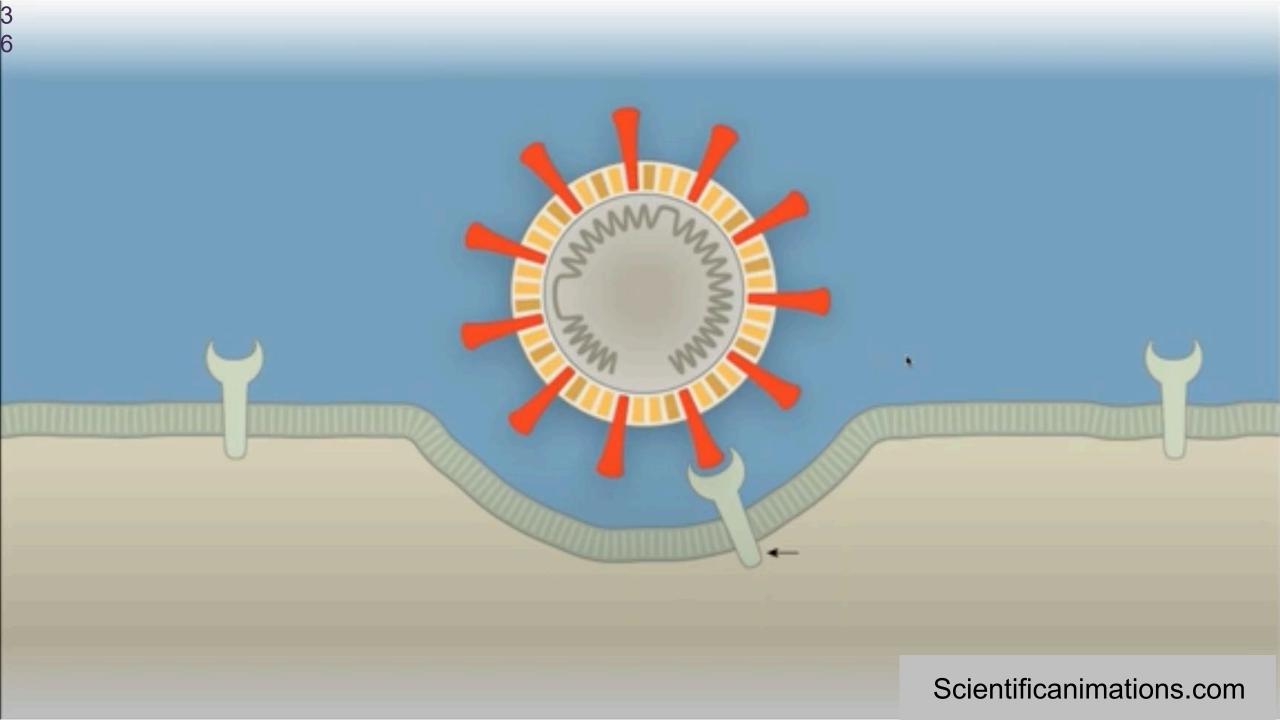
## **Pathogenic**

MERS-CoV (MERS)

SARS-CoV (SARS)

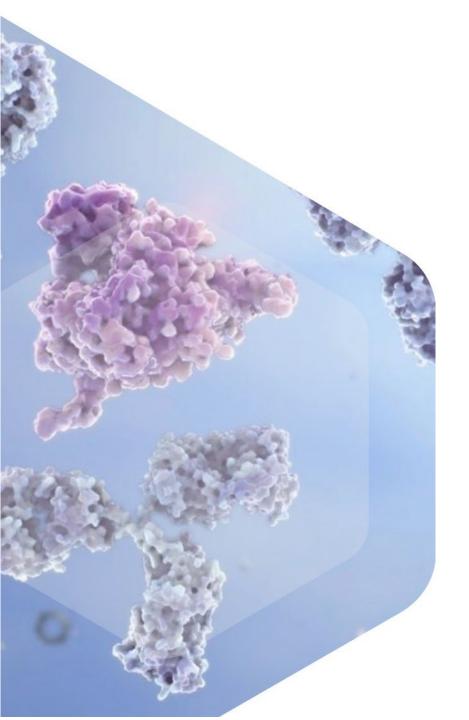
SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19)





#### Immune and Inflammatory Response to SAR-CoV-2

- Phase 1--- Viral entry and specific adaptive immune response to eliminate the virus and preclude progression to severe stages.
- Phase 2--- Inflammatory response; if protective immune response is impaired virus will propagate, cytokine storm, tissue damage will follow and ARS will develop



Zinc Inhibits Coronavirus and Arterivirus RNA dependent RNA Polymerase Activity *In Vitro* and Zinc Ionophores Block the Replication of These Viruses in Cell Culture.

#### Vitamin D insufficiency is prevalent in severe COVID-19

Frank H. Lau, MD, FACS, Rinku Majumder, PhD, Radbeh Torabi, MD, Fouad Saeg, BS, Ryan Hoffman, BS4, Jeffrey D. Cirillo, PhD5, Patrick Greiffenstein, MD, FACS medRxiv preprint doi: https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.04.24.20075838

Study: Small retrospective study with 20 COVID-19 patients

#### Results:

- Among ICU subjects, 11 (84.6%) had VDI, vs. 4 (57.1%) of floor subjects.
- 100% of ICU patients less than 75 years old had VDI (n=11).
- 64.6% (n=7) had critically low 25OHD (<20 ng/mL) and three had <10 ng/mL.</li>
- The sepsis-induced coagulopathy score (SIC) was calculable for 8 subjects;
   62.5% (n=5) had SIC ≥ 4.
- Suppressed immune function was prevalent: 92.3% (n=12) were lymphocytopenic, and 9 were profoundly so.

#### **Vitamin C and Coronavirus**

 Reports indicate that intravenous (IV) vitamin C may help people suffering from this disease.

Recently, IV vitamin C clinical trials began in China and Italy.
Doctors in hard-hit areas of the United States are now
reporting using it. Furthermore, IV vitamin C appears in
some COVID-19 critical care guidelines.

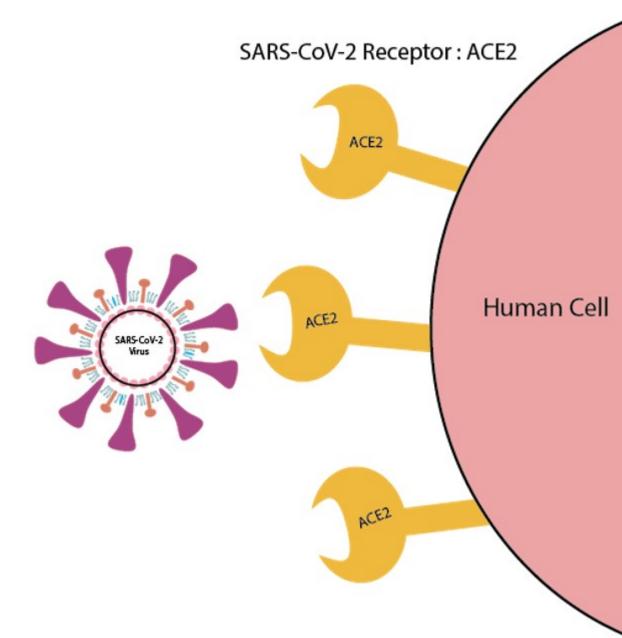
 Although doctors are using IV vitamin C, there is no published scientific evidence about the use of IV vitamin C in COVID-19. Therefore, its effectiveness cannot be fully evaluated.



#### Quercetin



Computer modeling identified quercetin as top agonist to COVID-19's S-protein binding to host cell ACE2 receptors, the entry way for virus



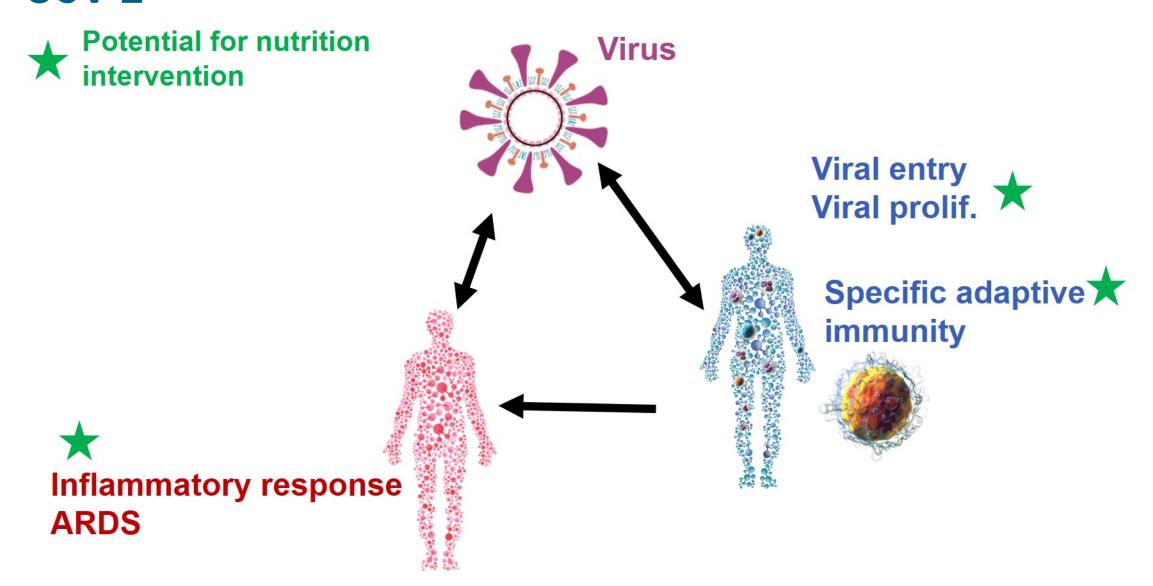
## This is supported by in vitro studies with SAR-CoV

(shares 79.5% genetic sequence with SAR-CoV-2)

SARS-CoV-2 Receptor: ACE2 ACE2 Human Cell ACE2

Kim et al. Journal of Enzyme Inhibition and Medicinal Chemistry 2020, VOL. 35, NO. 1, 145– 151

## **Nutrition, Immune and Inflammatory Response to SAR-CoV-2**



### Thank you!





# ADDRESSING FOOD & NUTRITION INSECURITY AMONG MEDICAID HCBS BENEFICIARIES



Sarah Downer, JD
Associate Director, Whole Person Care
Center for Health Law and Policy Innovation
Harvard Law School

#### **GOALS**

- Medicaid flexibilities and opportunities to cover food and nutrition services for the HCBS population.
- Identifying food and nutrition insecurity in the HCBS population.
- Seizing moments of opportunity coordinating nutrition support with nutrition counseling, lifestyle change programs, and disease management.
- Opportunities to improve the broader food environment during COVID-19.

#### HOME- AND COMMUNITY-BASED SERVICES

- <u>Defined</u>: "Combination of health services that meet medical needs and human services that support daily living."
- 1915(c) HCBS waiver eligibility requirements:
  - Demonstrate need for a Level of Care that would make the individual eligible for services in an institutional setting
- For the HCBS population, access to nutrition interventions as part of health care is critical, especially during COVID-19.

#### Medicaid Pathways to Food/Nutrition Access

Medicaid Waiver	Example
1915 (c) – HCBS for individuals otherwise requiring an institutional level of care	CO's waiver allows for coverage of home- delivered meals
1915 (i) – HCBS for a slightly less medically-complex population	
1115 – demonstration waiver	NC Medicaid will provide meals, groceries, and/or transportation to food access points to certain individuals

#### **COVID and MEDICAID WAIVERS:**

- 1915 (c) Appendix K emergency changes to Medicaid program
- 1115 waiver amendments fast-tracked

#### Screening for Food and Nutrition Needs

Increased use of social needs screening in health care settings

 States can require screening for Medicaid members via a waiver (e.g. Massachusetts)

 States can use their contracting authority to incentivize or require screening

Food insecurity screening vs. screening for other nutrition needs

#### **COMPLEMENTARY NUTRITION SERVICES**

 Nutrition counseling / medical nutrition therapy – coverage varies in Medicaid from state to state and, within states, by plan; more standard in Medicare

- Diabetes self-management education or the Diabetes Prevention Program – coverage varies by state; covered in Medicare
- Rehabilitation (cardiac, pulmonary, etc.) services often include nutrition counseling
- In some cases, these services are paired with receipt of food.

#### MAXIMIZING FOOD SECURITY FOR MEDICAID BENEFICIARIES

 Case management can support connection to food supports (SNAP, etc.); some states authorize one application for Medicaid and SNAP

 States have used CARES Act relief funds to support medically-tailored and home-delivered meal providers and increase supply of nutritious foods at food banks and pantries.

#### **Developing Partnerships to Support Nutrition Security:**

Experiences of Project Open Hand & California Food Is Medicine Coalition



**Paul Hepfer** 

CEO, Project Open Hand

https://openhand.org

and <a href="https://calfimc.org">https://calfimc.org</a>



#### **Outline**

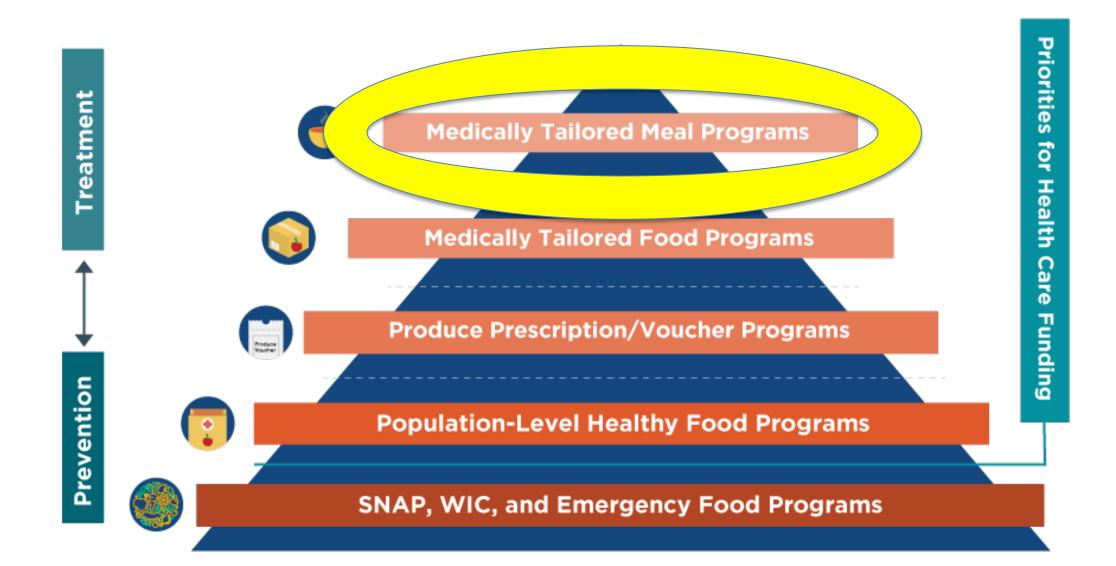
- Intro to Food Is Medicine
- CalFIMC and POH: Who We Are
- What We Do: Medically Tailored Meals (MTM) Programs and Benefits
- How: The Importance of Partnerships
- Lessons Learned







#### **FOOD IS MEDICINE PYRAMID**



#### **Definition of Medically Tailored Meals**

Medically tailored meals (MTM) are meals approved by a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) that reflect appropriate dietary therapy based on evidence-based practice guidelines.

Diet/meals are recommended by a RDN based on a nutritional assessment and a referral by a health care provider to address a medical diagnosis, symptoms, allergies, medication management and side effects to ensure the best possible nutrition-related health outcomes.

# Who We Are: CA Food Is Medicine Coalition and Project Open Hand

- Providers of Medically Tailored Meal Services (MTM) in California
- Coalition of six non-profit community based agencies, covering counties that represent 48% of the state population
- Over 150 years of collective experience providing nutrition security programs
- Focus on low-income patients with chronic and acute illnesses







#### Who We Are: Emphasize Nutrition Security

- Nutrition security = a situation that exists when people, at all times, have access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life (USDA, 2017).
- Food security usually focuses on availability of calories.
- Nutrition security requires the intake of a wide range of foods which provides the *essential nutrients* that individuals need to maintain or improve their health status, including meeting specific needs ...(NLM, 2020).





#### Who & Where We Are







healing with food+love

Project Open Hand

meals with love







#### What We Do

#### State Supported MTM Pilot Program

- ➤ 4-year pilot funded by \$6 million from CA legislature; Overseen by CA Department of Health Care Services
- > 1,000+ Medi-Cal patients
- Complete nutrition (3 meals per day) for 12 weeks plus Medical Nutrition Therapy
- Eligibility: CHF diagnosis, Medi-Cal patients
- Collaborate with Health plans for MTM Programs
  - > Anthem, Blue Shield Promise, Kaiser Permanente
  - L.A. Care, San Francisco Health Plan







#### What We Do (cont.): Who We Serve

- Collectively 75,000 meals per week, and up to
   3.3 million meals annually
- Over 16,000 clients annually
- Emphasis on Health Equity:
  - ➤ 52% are People of Color
  - >51% are over 60 years old
  - >52% are under the poverty line





#### **Impacts of MTM Service**

Evidence shows great benefits of MTM, including up to:

- 32% Decline in Net Health Care Costs See <u>calfimc.org/research</u> for details
- 63% Reduction in Hospitalizations
- 50% Improvement in Medication Adherence
- Increase in Patient Satisfaction







#### **How? Importance of Partnerships**

- We are members of National Food is Medicine
   Coalition sharing information & practices
- Formed California FIM Coalition to implement the state pilot program (with DHCS) in 2017
  - Coordinate data gathering and tracking
  - Share best practices regular meetings
  - Collaborate on evaluation, problem-solving, strategy, fundraising, expansion, etc.





#### Partnerships (cont.)

- Collaborate with State Government Agencies
  - ➤ CA Department of Health Care Services
  - ➤ CA Department of Aging Master Plan
  - ➤ Legislators as Champions
- Collaborate with County & Local Agencies
  - ➤ Departments of Aging & Disability
  - City & County Health Departments
- Federal Government
  - ➤ Administration for Community Living
  - > FEMA
  - ➤ New Federal Bill for MTM (McGovern)



#### Partnerships (cont.)

- Collaboration with Health Plans
  - Support of pilots/programs contracts with our member agencies for nutrition services
  - Advising (on our Medical Advisory council)
  - Some support and partnership in our advocacy efforts
  - Provide medical information and referrals for MTM programs





#### **Additional Partnerships (cont.)**

- Hospitals and clinics (medical & nutrition experts, healthcare providers)
- ➤ Other non-profit organizations, on policy efforts & social services
- > Food banks
- > Food suppliers/companies
- Numerous Volunteers
- > Philanthropy/foundations





#### Lessons

- Perseverance and Partnerships Pay off
- Visibility, Credibility, and Involvement in Collaborative Policy Efforts
- Dedication to Nutrition Security for All
- ➤ Growing Recognition of the Importance of Nutrition Security → New Challenges and New Opportunities In response to COVID





#### **Questions? Comments?**

Further information and references on

Project Open Hand: <a href="https://openhand.org">https://openhand.org</a>

CA Food Is Medicine Website: <a href="https://Calfimc.org">https://Calfimc.org</a>



Paul Hepfer, CEO, Project Open Hand

For more information on CA Food Is Medicine Coalition, contact

Ann Thrupp, Director, athrupp@openhand.org





# Food Insecurity & Innovative Nutrition

A Person Centered Approach "Wholesome Village"

Bethesda NEWtrition & Wellness Solutions Harlivleen Gill MBA, RDN, LDN

#### Overview

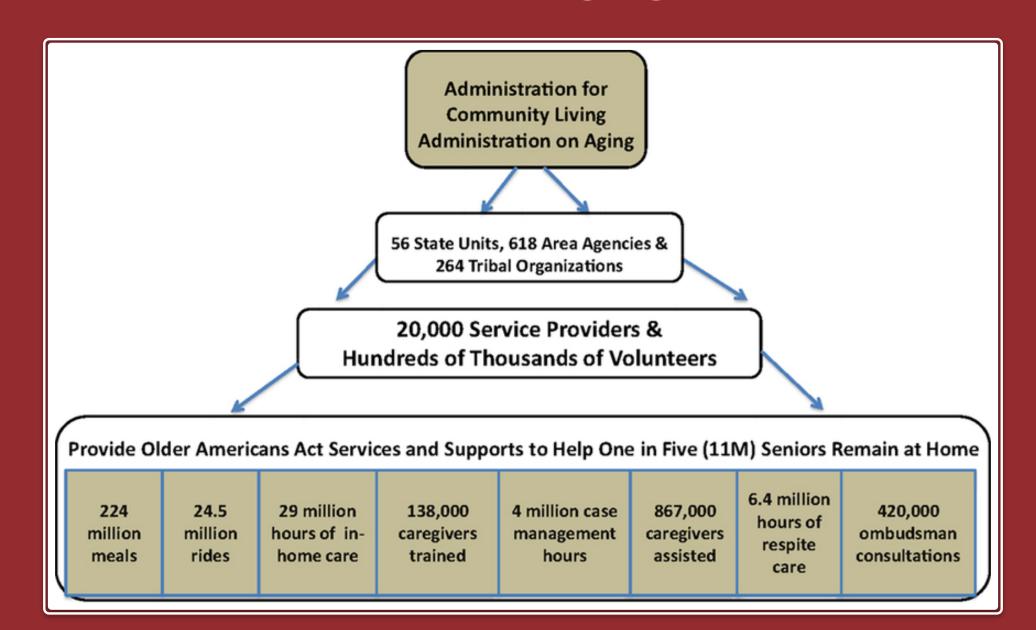
#### Bethesda NEWtrition & Wellness Solutions'

Approach to Food Insecurity among HCBS

- **Innovation**
- Financial
- Expertise
- Design
- Delivery
- **Best Practices**



#### Overview of the Aging Network



# Innovations in Aging ACL Innovations in Nutrition Project

#### **INNU2020 HC2C Project**

#### **Objectives**

Connecting healthcare to community based organizations through:

- Technological connections in the diabetes pathway
- Combating social isolation by using technology
- 3. Providing medically tailored meals & nutrition education by using technology
- Facilitating a sustainable model for reimbursement by payers

## Innovations in Technology

#### **Equity in Technology**

- Use non-wifi dependent, interactive materials
- User-friendly, "low-tech" tools for ordering meals from local co-ops or restaurants
- Connecting through a bidirectional referral system using CRISP
  - CRISP: regional health information exchange for e-referrals & communication.

## Innovative Collaboration

#### **Key Partners**

- Maryland Department of Health
- Maryland Primary Care Program
- Maryland Department of Aging
- Maryl Medicaid
- Carefirst Insurance

# Equity & Sustainability

#### **Considerations**

Culturally Relevant & Medically Tailored Meals

Educational Resources to provide **person centered** outreach reaching recipients at their
technology level, language, culturally
competent

Self sustaining model starting at the local level

75

### INNU Outcomes

#### Categories

- Patient reported outcomes
- Clinical Outcomes
- Improved Utilization of Resources

## Financial Considerations

#### **Funding**

payers

Older Americans Act, Title III

Emerging: Using the Social Determinants of Health Reimbursement Models for long term coverage of meals & services by

**Traditional** Funding sources under the

Temporary: COVID19 CARES Act allocated additional funding for AAA's increased needs for meals & other needed services.

## Expertise of - RDNs -

### Registered Dietitian Nutritionists

RDNs are the food & nutrition experts who can translate the science of nutrition into practical solutions for healthy living.

RDNs use their nutrition expertise to help individuals make unique, positive lifestyle changes.

-EatrightPro.Org

### Wholesome Village: Design

- Shelf stable, medically tailored meals designed by Registered Dietitians
- Meals, menus & recipes meet regulatory requirements & are crafted for a variety of dietary & culturally relevant needs
- Connection to resources for lifestyle change, nutrition counseling, & self management programs
- Outreach that allows for "unplugged" access & technologically equitable to our "Virtual Village".
- Equitable technology, interactive materials, <u>non-wifi dependent</u> for those at risk for social isolation
   Providing a sense of community through food & access to resources



#### **SCAN ME**



### Wholesome Village: Delivery

#### Shelf stable meals to the rescue!

When the COVID-19 pandemic began, access to food supply was limited & supply chain issues made food delivery timing & stock availability unstable.

\*The Wholesome Village closed 2020 providing approximately 400,000 meals to those in need\*

#### **Key factors to our success:**

"Shelf Stability" of the Meals

Centralized Distribution

Collaboration: Healthcare>CBO's

Strategic food service planning by the RDNs leading the program

## Best Practices Takeaways

#### Pricing it right!

Consistency in design & delivery for a scalable capacity model

Expertise of **RDNs** in nutrition solutions to enhance the efficiency of resources

Creating a network with trusted community partners such as AAAs for true needs assessment of the community

Using the think "outside the box" approach for solving food insecurity & social isolation issues

## From our Village to yours Thank you!

#### Resources

#### **LINKS**

Administration for Community Living (ACL)

**INNU Grant Award Recipients** 

Innovations in Nutrition Programs & Services

"n4a" National Association of Areas on Aging

**Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics** 

Food is Medicine Coalition

Better Medicare Alliance

#### Older Americans Act Senior Nutrition Program



Judy Simon, MS,RD, LDN
National Nutritionist
Administration for Community Living
Administration on Aging
Judy.Simon@acl.hhs.gov
www.acl.gov



#### Older Americans Act Nutrition Services for Older Adults

Services include congregate and home-delivered meals, nutrition screening, assessment, education and counseling.

#### Intent:

- Reduce hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition
- Promote socialization
- Promote the health and well-being

#### Eligibility

- 60 years of age and spouse of any age
- No income requirement
- Cost-sharing not permitted; donation-based services
- Nutritional requirements are the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and the Dietary Reference Intakes

#### **Targeted Populations**

Nutrition Services are not intended to reach every individual in the community. Programs target adults age 60 and older who are in greatest social and economic need, with particular attention to the following groups:

- Low-income older adults
- Minority older individuals
- Older adults in rural communities
- Older individuals with limited English proficiency
- Older adults at risk of institutional care

#### **Nutrition Services for Older Adults**

Approximately 5,000 providers together serve more than 900,000 meals a day in communities across the country.

Nutrition Programs are funded (in part) by ACL, which administers the Older Americans Act. They are also funded by:

- State and local governments,
- Foundations,
- Direct payment for services,
- Fundraising,
- Program participants' voluntary contributions (time and/or money), and
- Other sources.

#### Results and Impact

Hospital, Emergency
Department and Nursing
Homes

- 80% of congregate meal participants believe their health is improved
- Congregate and HDM participants have lower healthcare utilization
- Percentage of low-care nursing home residents are reduced 1% for every \$25 spent on HDMs per year per adult

#### **Unprecedented Times**

#### Service providers are:

- Providing meals in a non-contact environment
- Maintaining food safely during preparation through delivery
- Alleviating social isolation
- Addressing service gaps-especially in rural areas and tribal areas



Non-Contact Meal Delivery Pivot

#### Innovations in Nutrition

#### 2017-2020 Grantee Summaries

Innovative projects that enhance the quality, effectiveness, and outcomes of nutrition services programs provided by the national aging services network.

#### 2021 Funding Announcements

- Community Research
- Statewide Research

#### To Learn More About the Aging Network

#### **ACL** website

- Information for Partners, Researchers, Professionals
- Nutrition Services
- COVID-19 Resources for Network and Consumers
- National Survey of Older Americans Act Participants

**Coming Soon!** National Resource Center on Nutrition & Aging

**National Council on Aging** 

**ADvancing States** 

National Association of Area Agencies on Aging

National Association of Nutrition & Aging Services Programs

Meals on Wheels America

#### Resources: Older Adult Food Insecurity & Malnutrition

Food Research & Action Center

**Feeding America** 

<u>DefeatMalnutrition.Today</u>

- National Blueprint: Achieving Quality Malnutrition Care for Older Adults
- Quality Malnutrition Care

**Community Malnutrition Resource Hub** (National Council on Aging)

Malnutrition Solution Center (American Society of Parenteral & Enteral Nutrition)

**Nutrition Focused Physical Exam** (Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics)

### Questions?

#### Survey

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Please use the survey link:

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/5D5YLLX

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## Connecting HCBS Beneficiaries to the Digital Community: Internet Access, Digital Literacy, and Affordability

2020 HCBS Technical Assistance Series February 4, 2021 3:00-4:30 p.m. ET

