

Food assistance may help older adults adhere to diabetes meds

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(HealthDay)—Participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance

Program (SNAP) may reduce the number of low-income older adults with diabetes forgoing medications because of cost, according to a study published online Nov. 19 in *JAMA Internal Medicine*.

Jennifer A. Pooler, M.P.P., and Mithuna Srinivasan, Ph.D., from IMPAQ International in Columbia, Maryland, evaluated data from 1,302 seniors who participated in the National Health Interview Survey from 2013 through 2016. Included participants had diabetes or borderline diabetes, were eligible to receive SNAP benefits, were prescribed medications, and incurred out-of-pocket [medical expenses](#) in the previous year.

The researchers found that 36.3 percent of the study participants participated in SNAP and 12.9 percent reported cost-related medication nonadherence in the previous year. There was a moderate decrease in cost-related medication nonadherence among participants in SNAP compared with eligible nonparticipants. Similar results were seen for subgroups that had prescription drug coverage and less than \$500 in out-of-pocket medical costs in the [previous year](#); however, similar reductions were not seen not for older adults lacking prescription coverage or those with higher medical costs.

"In addition to alleviating [food insecurity](#), food assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program may have a spillover income benefit by helping older adults with diabetes better afford their medications, perhaps by reducing out-of-pocket food expenditures," the authors write.

More information: [Abstract/Full Text \(subscription or payment may be required\)](#)

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