

# The Relationship of Food Insecurity and Childhood Obesity: A Paradox of Hunger and Overweight

Marilyn Townsend, PhD, RD  
[Mstownsend@ucdavis.edu](mailto:Mstownsend@ucdavis.edu)

March 20, 2001 San Diego

## I. INTRODUCTION

A. Goals: to investigate the relationship between food insecurity and overweight.

### B. Questions

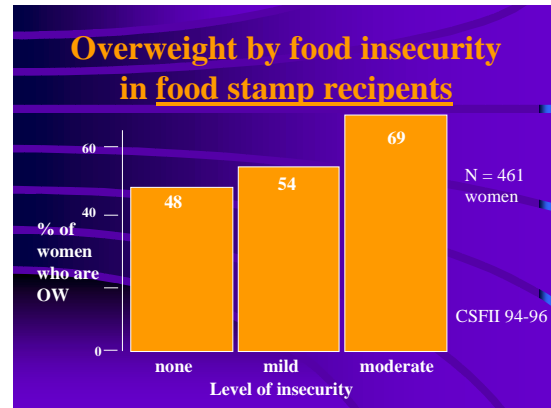
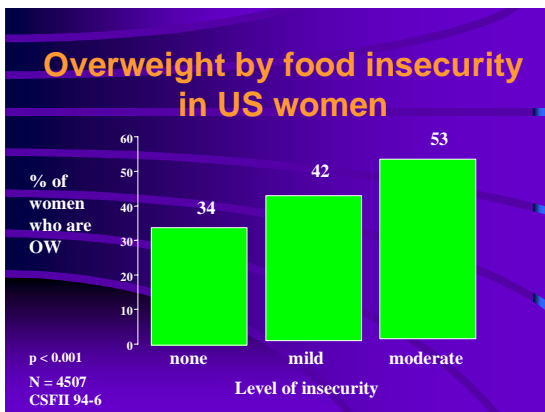
1. Is there overweight among food insecure adults in the US?
2. Is there more overweight among food insecure adult than the general population?
3. Among food stamp recipients, is there more OW among the food insecure?
4. Controlling for other factors, is food insecurity a predictor of adult overweight?
5. Is there overweight among food insecure children in the US?
6. Is there more overweight among food insecure children than other children?

### C. Definitions

## II. METHODS

A. CSFII 1994-96 (Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals)

B. Wording of question: Which of the following statements best describes the food eaten in your household in the last 3 months?



## III RESULTS

## III. DISCUSSION

- A. Food insecurity paradox: adults??, children??
- B. Food Stamp Cycle Hypothesis: indirect evidence
1. Adult food deprivation & refeeding studies
  2. Animal starvation & refeeding model
  3. Child studies

## IV. IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COMMUNITY

## V. TAKE HOME MESSAGES

- A. The overweight/food insecurity relationship is a new field of study. There are many unanswered questions.
- B. Food insecurity is related to overweight among US women in this study.
- C. Food insecurity appears to have a unique effect on overweight separate from income.
- D. New information on children will be presented.