



## **ATLANTA COMMUNITY FOOD BANK'S 'FOOD AS MEDICINE' PROGRAM IMPROVES HEALTH FOR GEORGIANS FACING HUNGER**

*Partnership with Grady Health System reduces hospitalizations by 31%*

**ATLANTA, GA (July 8, 2026)** – Health is greatly impacted by the food on your plate, and new national findings show just how important this correlation is for neighbors in Atlanta. The Food as Medicine 3.0 (FAM3) [Cumulative Report](#), released today as the largest national Food as Medicine evaluation of its kind, finds that the Atlanta Community Food Bank's partnership with Grady Health System is supporting measurable health improvements for neighbors facing hunger, including a 31% decrease in overnight hospitalizations among program participants.

The Food as Medicine program, a [Feeding America](#) initiative funded by the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation and evaluated by the Center for Nutrition & Health Impact, connects consistent access to nutritious food with better health.

The Atlanta program, which reached thousands of patients from April 2023 to December 2025, uses a "screen-refer-nourish" model. Patients screened for food insecurity during medical visits at Grady Health System are referred to Jesse Hill Market—operated by the Atlanta Community Food Bank and Grady and located adjacent to the hospital—where they receive medically tailored, culturally significant food alongside wraparound services including SNAP application assistance and hands-on cooking and nutrition classes.

In Atlanta, the program saw the following positive outcomes:

- 3,067 patients received food through the program
- 2,097 patients were referred to SNAP
- 31% decrease in overnight hospitalizations, compared to baseline
- 13% average increase in fruit and vegetable intake
- 12.7% reduction in participants struggling to afford medications
- 9% decrease in participants experiencing food insecurity
- 8.3% fewer emergency room visits on average
- 8% of participants no longer felt they needed to "miss or delay medical care" due to cost

"These findings affirm what we see every day—when neighbors have consistent access to fresh, nutritious food, their health and quality of life improve," said [Kyle Waide](#), President and CEO of the Atlanta Community Food Bank. "Fewer hospital stays, fewer trips to the emergency room and more families being able to afford their medications are direct results of the Food as Medicine program. We are deeply committed to making healthy food more accessible and practical for our Georgia neighbors because health starts with what's on your plate."



Atlanta's outcomes mirror national findings. Across the three-year FAM3 initiative, health care providers screened more than 1.45 million patients for food insecurity and connected more than 161,000 households across 13 states to Food as Medicine programs. Across the FAM3 initiative, hospitalizations fell by 14% and emergency department visit rates fell by 11%, demonstrating that consistent, medically supported food reduced costly healthcare encounters for participants and health systems alike, while providing stability for households—reflected in a nearly 7% increase in food security, a 47% relative increase. Among participants with both baseline and follow-up clinical data, HbA1c, BMI and LDL cholesterol all improved meaningfully, with greater gains for those who attended more dietitian sessions.

A visionary \$14.1 million investment by Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation's parent foundation is fueling a national movement, redefining how America connects food and health in a dignified way so that more neighbors can access the nutritious food and health care resources they need to manage chronic health conditions and improve well-being.

The findings arrive as policymakers, health systems and insurers increasingly recognize food security as both a public health and economic concern. The program is designed to deliver services in ways that help remove barriers and respect choice. Participants graduate after one year but can continue receiving food from Jesse Hill Market and SNAP assistance as needed.

For more information about the Atlanta Community Food Bank, including how to help, visit <https://www.acfb.org> or follow them on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#).

### **About Atlanta Community Food Bank**

The Atlanta Community Food Bank works to end hunger with the food, people, and big ideas needed to ensure our neighbors have the nourishment to lead healthy and productive lives. Far too many people in our own community experience hunger every day. Through more than 700 community-based, nonprofit partners in 29 counties, we help thousands of families, children, and seniors get healthy food every year. Our goal is that all hungry people across metro Atlanta and north Georgia will have access to the nutritious meals they need when they need them. It takes the power of our whole community to make that possible. In 2023, the Atlanta Community Food Bank distributed its one billionth meal. Join us at [ACFB.org](https://www.acfb.org).

### **About Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation**

The Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, is a philanthropic arm of the Elevance Health Foundation. The Foundation works to improve the health of the socially vulnerable through partnerships and programs in our communities with an emphasis on maternal-infant health; behavioral health; and food as medicine. Additionally, the Foundation also responds to disasters when our communities need us the most. ®ANTHEM is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc. The Blue Cross and Blue Shield names and symbol are registered marks of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. To learn more about the Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Foundation and the Elevance Health Foundation, please visit [www.elevancehealth.foundation](https://www.elevancehealth.foundation) and its blog at [www.medium.com/elevancehealthfoundation](https://www.medium.com/elevancehealthfoundation).



### **About Feeding America®**

Rooted in the voices of neighbors facing hunger, Feeding America® unites the country to ensure everyone has access to food and a thriving future. We support tens of millions of people as part of nationwide network of 250+ food banks, 20+ statewide food bank associations, 10+ regional co-ops and 60,000+ agency partners, food pantries and meal programs. Powered by leaders and volunteers embedded in local communities, we are one of the nation's most effective food distribution systems to drive immediate impact today – and a catalyst for long-term change through advocating for legislation that improves food security and work to address its factors. We partner with people experiencing food insecurity, policymakers, organizations and supporters, acting united with unwavering commitment to provide nourishing food and work to end hunger at its roots so everyone can live fuller, healthier lives. Visit [FeedingAmerica.org](http://FeedingAmerica.org) to learn more.

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