January Newsletter



A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Community Partners & Stakeholders,

As we bid farewell to the old and welcome the new, I am filled with a sense of gratitude and excitement for the journey that lies ahead. The past year has been a testament to our collective resilience and determination. As we step into 2024, I am confident that we will continue to thrive and achieve new heights together.

Reflecting on the challenges and triumphs of the past year, I am reminded of the incredible strength and adaptability that defines Unidos Contra La Diabetes. We have faced uncertainties with courage, embraced change with open minds, and celebrated successes as one united team. Each one of you has played an integral role in shaping our path, and I am genuinely thankful for your unwavering commitment to our Collective Impact.

Let's have a fantastic 2024!

Moises Arjona Jr.
Collective Impact Director

STEERING COMMITTEE

Wednesday, January 10th, 2024

Time: 9:00am-11:00am

Location: LUPE (1601 E Business 83, San Juan, TX 78589) Main Hall

WORKGROUPS

Policy	Prediabetes Education
Tuesday, January 2nd 8:30a.m.-10:00a.m. Zoom Online	Tuesday, January 2nd 1:30p.m.-3:00p.m. Zoom Online
Screening	**Data**
Thursday, January 11th 10:30a.m.-12:00p.m. Zoom Online	Thursday, January 4th 1:30p.m.-3:00p.m. Zoom Online

RGV Health Connect



This month Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) indicators have been updated with 2022 data. Data are available for the U.S., states, and counties. The updated indicators include Alzheimer's Disease or Dementia: Medicare Population, Chronic Kidney Disease: Medicare Population, Depression: Medicare Population, Diabetes: Medicare Population, Hypertension: Medicare Population, and Flu Vaccinations: Medicare Population among others.

In addition, American Community Survey (ACS) 1-year estimates indicators have been added and published to RGV Health Connect. These indicators include: Gender Pay Gap, Children Living Below 200% Poverty Level, Families Living Below 200% Poverty Level, and

IMPORTANT SITE INFORMATION: The RGV Health Connect site will be offline for scheduled maintenance from Thursday, January 11, 2024, 11 pm CST through Sunday, January 14, 2024. Access will resume on Monday, January 15, 2024. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause and appreciate your understanding.

Do you have data that you would like to share with others in the community? RGV Health Connect is a platform that allows you to share your data with the entire Rio Grande Valley community. Visit us at RGV Health Connect and submit your resource.

Website - https://www.ucdrgv.org/
Subscribe - https://www.ucdrgv.org/login/

Outreach



Outreach:

Build Tomorrow, Today! - Region One Education

STJDA Groundbreaking Ceremony

Christmas at the Park! - San Benito Rotary

Dancing with Superior Stars - Superior

Water Bottle Distribution:

UCD Ambassador(s)

Pharr Housing Authority

Sugary Beverage Kit:

~~Youth Mental First Aid Training- DSHS~~

A Christmas to Remember - Pharr

Housing Authority

Proyecto Juan Diego Christmas Party

UCD Collaborative Discussion Meeting

Highlights

Drum Roll Please... It's official, our new Mascot's name is **HYDRO**! We appreciate every one of our partners and community members who helped vote on a name. We're excited to see Hydro out and about in the RGV.



Announcements

Upcoming Holidays & Important Dates:

Merry Christmas - Monday, December 25, 2023

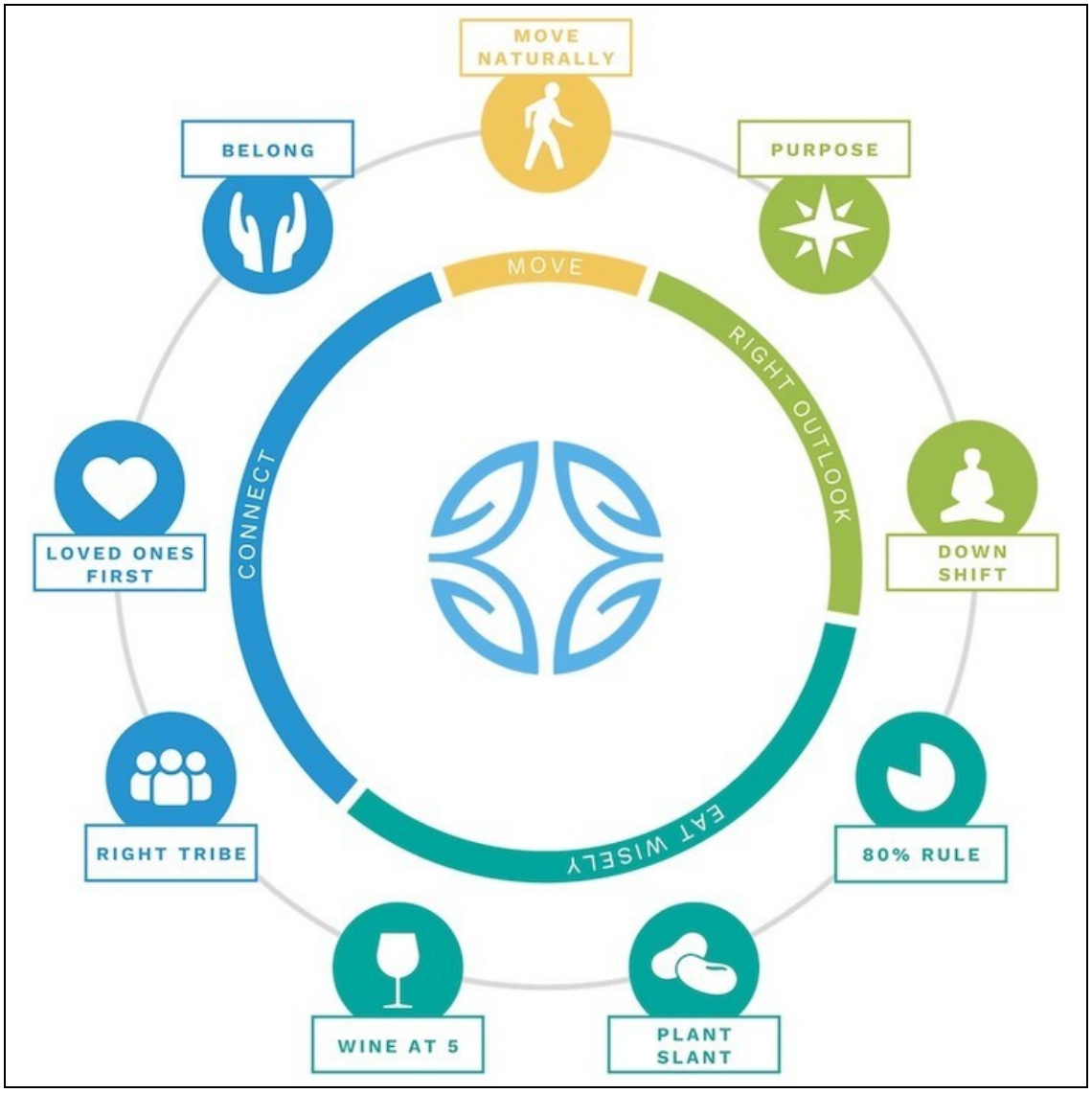
New Year's Eve - Sunday, December 31, 2023

Steering Committee Meeting - Wednesday, January 10, 2024

UCD Office Closure: Monday, December 25, 2023 - Monday, January 1, 2023







Making An Impact

partnership with Wholistics Health. 65% of participants found the program useful in supporting their health journey and 61% said that the comprehensive tips across all dimensions (nutrition, exercise, mental health, sleep) were the most helpful.





Click the link below to request any of the following:

UCD Community Resources

Sugary Beverage Kit

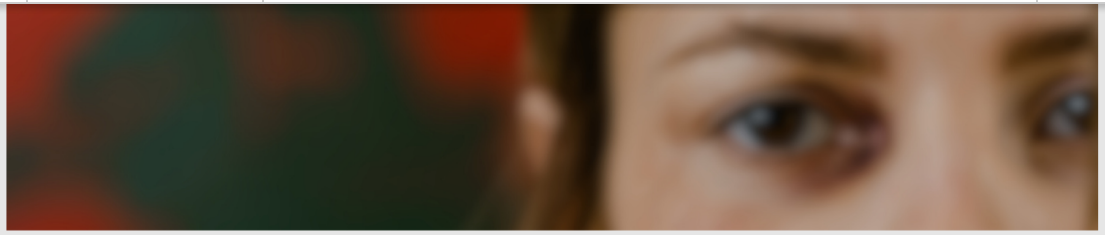
Traveling Exhibit

Health Posters

Workplace Wellness

Take the Steps for a Healthier Lifestyle with personalized QR Code





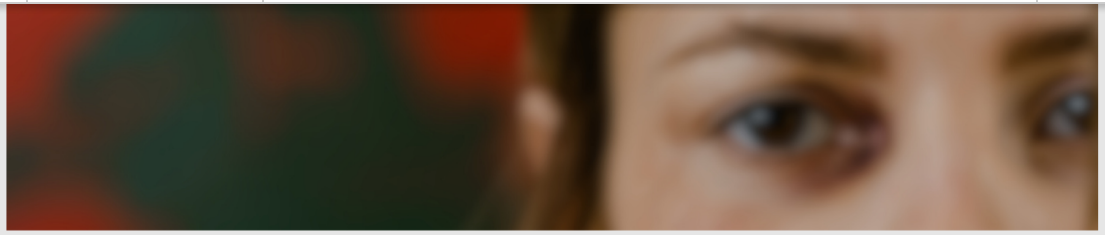
Food Trauma in the Latino Community and Type 2 Diabetes

By Aurora Ramos

Around 38 million Americans have diabetes with a large majority of those having type 2 diabetes at all ages (Slupski, 2021). However, what is not often talked about is the connection between adverse childhood experiences, food insecurity, and cultural influences that increase the risk of type 2 diabetes. Similarly, what is not often discussed is how these types of experiences can create generational food habits which can contribute to the diagnosis of type 2 diabetes.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACES) according to Royer et al., (2022) are traumatizing events that occur in childhood that predict health and social outcomes across the lifespan. Some examples of these experiences could be forms of abuse, neglect, parental separation or divorce, family member–related mental health problems, substance abuse, incarceration, suicide, and death which are especially higher amongst people of color (Royer et al., 2022). An association has been found between ACES and the occurrence of type 2 diabetes. Studies have shown that as the number of ACES increases so does the risk of type 2 diabetes (Huffhines, 2016). These experiences can also affect the mental health of these children growing up and can contribute to the diagnosis of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). Research has also actually found an increased risk for type 2 diabetes amongst veterans with a diagnosis of PTSD (Huffhines, 2016).

However, food insecurity is also an issue that can also indirectly increase the risk of type 2 diabetes. According to the United Stated Department of Agriculture (USDA) food insecurity is defined as, “a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food (USDA, 2023).



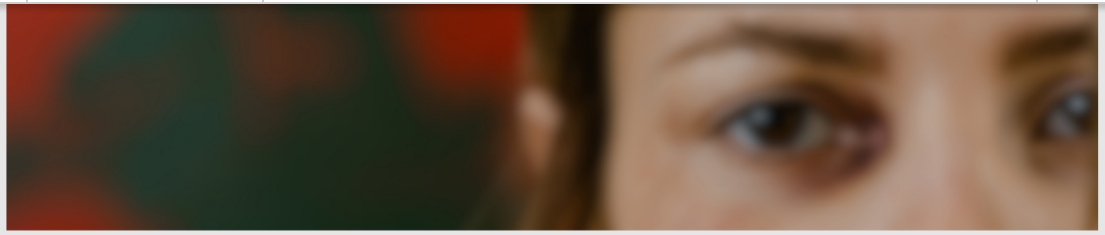
”The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) (2022) states that lack of access to healthy foods is also a form of food insecurity. Food insecurity can increase the risk of type 2 diabetes and affect diabetes management for those who already have diabetes (CDC, 2022).

“I eat four to five servings of food, because growing up, we did not have a refrigerator or stove and so, we had to eat all the food that prepared that evening. It could not go to waste and now as an adult, I feel that I have no choice but to continue to eat four servings or more per meal”.

Regular access to food is an important basic need for a child’s physical, mental, and emotional development. Approximately 44 million people in the United States faced lack of food security of those reported almost 13 million identify as Latino (Feeding America, 2023). Last year in 2022 nearly 1 in 3 Latino children did not have reliable access to food (Feeding America, 2023).

The lack of access to food or lack of access to good quality foods can impact a child in many direct and indirect ways. In some low-income households' parents are on a budget and can only afford less expensive lower quality food with poorer nutrition (Thomas et al., 2019).

“Food trauma is something that we do not think about when we hear the word “trauma”. Unfortunately, the more we are in the community, the more we hear stories that are painful and have left many in our community to suffer. The Rio Grande Valley is unique and, as we have stated before, rich in culture and traditions, which all revolve around food. During this time of the year many of us are socializing and spending time with others, which can lead to overeating and cause some added weight gain. We wanted to share a few comments that we have heard from community members this past year and we are purposely not including names out of respect for the individual as the stories/comments were hard for them to share. “



Eating this type of diet can have overall health consequences over time. As well as creating the feeling of needing to eat as much as you can in case you do not have access to food again or because you do not know when your next meal will be (Abdurahman, 2019). Also feeling guilty for throwing food away because of the feeling that it is wasteful or "bad" to throw food away. Habits like these over time can increase risk of type 2 diabetes because of the poorer diet of low-quality foods and unhealthy eating habits that will cause an accumulation of visceral fat, and chronic disease outcomes such as type 2 diabetes (Abdurahman et al., 2019).

"We did not know what we were poor, our family did not qualify for food stamps and my father was too proud to ask for assistance. Sometimes all we had to eat was potted meat with saltine crackers and that was for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. I do not like to think about those times and now I tend to overindulge in eating".

As mentioned, it is very common for Latinos to experience food insecurity. This exemplifies that these types of generational food habits are quite common amongst the Latino community

It is important to spread awareness of these generational food habits to acknowledge their existence and then be able to address changing them to better the health of our community.

"Finish all your food" was something I heard a lot from my mom growing up. Because we experienced food insecurity our faith in God to provide was how we remained hopeful during difficult times. It was engraved in me that throwing away food we had prayed over was to be ungrateful for the blessings we were granted. Thus, even though we may have felt full, finishing all our food was how we expressed gratitude not only for my mother preparing the meal but also for answered prayers. A lot of the meals consisted of high carbs like rice, fideo, potatoes, and pasta because it was the most filling and affordable. If we dared to be wasteful, the notorious "the starving children from Africa" lecture was guaranteed to arise. For me, this later developed into feeling guilty, anxious and difficulty practicing healthy portion control thus, overeating and led to one of the determinants of becoming obese.

FOR THE health OF IT



COOKIES

INGREDIENTS

- 10 large Medjool dates pitted*
- 1 tablespoon fresh ginger grated
- ½ cup coconut flour simply blend desiccated coconut till extra fine
- 2 tablespoons flax meal to help bind
- 3 tablespoons blackstrap molasses
- 2 tablespoons 100% pure maple syrup
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- pinch of cardamom
- pinch of nutmeg
- 2½ cups white almond meal fine

DIRECTIONS

- Roughly chop your dates, then add everything but the almond meal to a food processor and blitz till a paste forms – it might be a bit sticky – that's ok.
- Transfer to a large mixing bowl, and add the almond meal.
- Kneed the almond meal into the paste until a nice dough forms.
- If it is still a little sticky to work with, pop it in the fridge for an hour or two.
- Roll dough out onto a dehydrator teflex sheet ½ cm thick.
- Cut little shapes out.
- Press in some goji berries down the centre if you used a gingerbread man cutter.
- Dehydrate at 115°F till dry. Yes you can put these in the oven on low.



SOURCE: BLUEZONES.COM



PAN DE JENGIBRE GALLETAS

INGREDIENTES

- 10 dátiles Medjool grandes sin hueso*
- 1 cucharada de jengibre fresco rallado
- ½ taza de harina de coco, simplemente mezcle el coco desecado hasta que esté muy fino
- 2 cucharadas de harina de lino para ayudar a unir3 tablespoons blackstrap molasses
- 2 cucharadas de jarabe de arce 100% puro
- ½ cucharadita de canela
- pizca de cardamomo
- pizca de nuez moscada
- 2½ tazas de harina de almendras blancas finas

DIRECCIONES

- Pique los dátiles en trozos grandes, luego agregue todo menos la harina de almendras a un procesador de alimentos y mezcle hasta que se forme una pasta (puede que quede un poco pegajosa), eso está bien.
- Transfiera a un tazón grande y agregue la harina de almendras.
- Amasó la harina de almendras hasta obtener la pasta hasta que se forme una masa agradable.
- Si todavía está un poco pegajoso al trabajar con él, mételo en el refrigerador durante una o dos horas.
- Extienda la masa sobre una lámina deshidratadora Teflex de ½ cm de espesor.
- Recorta pequeñas formas
- Presiona algunas bayas de goji en el centro si usaste un cortador de hombre de jengibre.
- Deshidratar a 115°F hasta que se seque. Sí, puedes ponerlos en el horno a temperatura baja.

SOURCE: BLUEZONES.COM

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https://www.ucdrgv.org/

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