

8. Food

1. Healthy eating habits

- No single food will supply all the nutrients your body needs. Good nutrition means eating a variety of foods. Food is divided into four main groups. It is important to eat foods from each group everyday. By doing so, you ensure your body has all the nutrients it needs.
 - a. Fruits and vegetables such as apples, bananas, carrots, and spinach
 - b. Wheat, rice, oats, bran, and barley such as whole grains, cereals and bread
 - c. Dairy products such as whole or skim milk, cream, and yogurt
 - d. Meats, fish, poultry, eggs, dried beans, and nuts
- Tips on how to keep from food poisoning
 - a. Always wash your hands with soap and warm water before handling food
 - b. Always refrigerate perishables and leftovers promptly
 - c. Never taste food that is moldy or that looks or smells strange
 - d. When in doubt, just throw it out!

2. My family needs food

- [Food Stamps](#) are available monthly to help low-income families meet their food needs. Food stamps are coupons or electronic benefit cards used to buy food at grocery stores, supermarkets, green markets, and co-ops.
 - a. Eligibility requires that family income not to exceed 130% of the federal poverty level (\$22,165 for a family of four) and no more than \$2,000 in countable resources such as cash, stocks, and bonds. Family households with at least one member over the age of 60 may have up to \$3,000 in countable resources. You can own your home and/or car and still qualify.
 - b. To apply you can get an application from the Job Center, Income Support Center or Food Stamp Office in your neighborhood. To find your centers, call the [Human Resources Administration](#) at **(877) HRA-8411** or click on one of the following boroughs: [Bronx](#), [Brooklyn](#), [Manhattan](#), [Queens](#), [Staten Island](#).
- [Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants and Children \(WIC\)](#) provides healthy, nutritional food for pregnant or postpartum women and for children under age 5 who are at nutritional risk as determined by a health professional. Recipients receive checks to purchase specific foods each month which are designed to supplement your diet.
 - a. To be eligible, family income cannot exceed 185% of the federal poverty level (\$31,543 for a family of four). Medicaid or Public Assistance automatically meets the income eligibility requirements for WIC.
 - b. To apply call the [New York State Growing up Healthy](#) hotline at **(800) 522-5006** for information.
- [Emergency foods \(Food Sources and Food Banks\)](#) are soup kitchens which serve meals and food pantries which provide food for you to bring home and prepare. Some locations will have services such as Medicaid, Food Stamp, Public Assistance and clothing distribution available.

- School Lunch Programs and the National School Lunch Program gives free or reduced price meals to students at participating public and private schools. Almost all schools in New York participate in the program. Contact your local school for more information.
3. Food Sources Guidelines: A list of documents to bring for food pantries and soup kitchens. **All attendees to pantry or kitchen are suggested to be cordial and clean. Most sites are on a first come first serve basis - ARRIVE EARLY!*

Once a month only: The person picking up food is only allowed to attend the pantry or kitchen once a month even though operating hours for the site is open every day.

Walk in: There is no requirement for documentation. Bring yourself and at times you will be required to sign in or get on line first.

Tickets: Due to limited supply at site, food will only be distributed to those who have obtained tickets. Arrive early to ensure that you get tickets.

Registration: Sign in and may be asked one or more of the following questions but no documentation is required: **name, address, number of people in household, social security number and proof of income.**

Call Ahead (Appointment only): Due to the large volume of people that the site is serving, it is necessary to know who and how many people will arrive, so site can prepare enough food.

Within Neighborhood only: Due to the large volume of people in need of food, the site can only serve people within the community.

ID (Photo ID): Should bring one of the following identifications unless specified. (Sometimes require ID for all members of family.):

- Public Assistance or Food Stamp card
- Driver's license
- Passport or Alien Registration Card
- Employment or student ID
- State ID

Proof of Income: Should bring one of the following unless specified:

- Public Assistance Budget computer printout
- SSI award letter
- Unemployment benefits record
- Annual tax return
- Social Security payment stub
- Pension payment stub
- Pay Stub

Proof of Family Size: Should bring one of the following unless specified:

- Public Assistance budget printout
- Child's health insurance card
- Child's current school record
- Child's current immunization or medical record
- Custody papers
- Child's birth certificate

Documentation of emergency: Should bring one of the following unless specified:

- Current referral from social agency
- Current Police Crime report

Referral: Should bring one of the following unless specified:

- Letter from social worker
- Letter from social agency (ex. food stamp agency, shelter)
Note: Many pantries and kitchens provide referrals as well.
- HRA Info Line **718-291-1900**
- Emergency Assistance 24 hour hotline **800-994-6494**
- Food for Survival **718-991-4300**
- [City Harvest](#) **917-351-8777**