



Food Matters: A Healthcare Education and Advocacy Program



To inspire clinicians to:

- **Provide anticipatory guidance** to patients and families about the importance of healthy foods and a healthy food system.
- **Work within health care facilities** to create a healthy food service model that is recognized as integral to a preventive health agenda.
- **Work within the community at a local, regional and national level**, to promote policies that support the development of a healthy, accessible, and fair food system.



Guiding Rationale for Food Matters



Our current industrialized food system:

- Produces large quantities of calorie-rich, nutrient-poor food
- Is a major driver of obesity, diabetes, cardiovascular disease, some kinds of cancer, malnutrition, and other chronic diseases
- Substantially contributes to environmental degradation, including air and water pollution, climate change, and loss of biodiversity



Guiding Rationale for Food Matters



The health of our food system is especially pertinent to the health of pregnant women, infants, children, and adolescents because:

- Good nutrition is an essential requirement of healthy human development,
- Developing humans are uniquely vulnerable to toxic environmental exposures,
- The health impacts of in-utero and early life nutrition, along with hazardous exposures, have consequences across an individual's lifespan.



Guiding Rationale for Food Matters



What is the responsibility of the healthcare sector to address the nutritional and environmental origins of the diseases they treat?

What role can the healthcare sector play in reversing the epidemics of today, and envisioning a healthier future?



Food Matters to Pregnant Women, Children and Future Generations



Nutrition Matters

Good nutrition is an essential requirement of healthy human development

Timing Matters

Health consequences of in-utero and early life exposures can manifest across an individual's lifespan

Vulnerability Matters

Developing fetus and human are uniquely vulnerable to environmental exposures



Components of the Food Matters Program



- **Establishment of clinical advisory group**
- **Clinical curriculum development and trainings** (pilots in Oakland, Philadelphia, Boston, Vermont... Pittsburgh, Michigan, Oregon)
- **Nationwide clinical network**
- **Maternal/Child health calendar**
- **Video for waiting rooms, clinics, exam rooms, community meetings**
- **Continued Healthy Foods in Hospitals national campaign work for more sustainable food service in healthcare facilities**



Advocacy / Follow-Up to Date



- 8,000 Food Matters calendars distributed Nationally
- Food Matters Grand Round series planned /Development of local faculty
- New collaboration with County Maternal/Child Health programs
- Translation of Food Matters materials into Spanish / Training with Promotoras program
- National Food Matters Webinar Series (AMA/Kaiser)- October 27th, November 3rd, November 10th
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Advocacy / Follow-Up to Date



- Follow-up intensive Food Matters Train-the Trainer planned
- Video release at FoodMed
- Additional trainings in Grand Rapids, MI and Portland, OR
- Partnership pilot program to incorporate breastfeeding promotion
- Sugar Sweetened Beverage Health Care Professional Sign on

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Reproductive Health And The Industrialized Food System: A Point Of Intervention For Health Policy

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ABSTRACT What food is produced, and how, can have a critical impact on human nutrition and the environment, which in turn are key drivers of healthy human reproduction and development. The US food production system yields a large volume of food that is relatively low in cost for consumers but is often high in calories and low in nutritional value. In this article we examine the evidence that intensive use of pesticides, chemical fertilizers, hormones, antibiotics, and fossil fuel in food production, as well as chemicals in food packaging, are potentially harmful to human reproductive and developmental health. We conclude that policies to advance a healthy food system are necessary to prevent adverse reproductive health effects and avoid associated health costs among current and future generations. These policies include changes to the Farm Bill and the Toxic Substances Control Act, and greater involvement by the health care sector in supporting and sourcing food from urban agriculture programs, farmers' markets, and local food outlets, as well as increasing understanding by clinicians of the links between reproductive health and industrialized food production.

Public policies that have informed food production in the United States since the end of World War II have supported the growth of a highly concentrated and productive food production and distribution system.¹ Our "industrialized" food system is characterized by intensive application of petroleum-based pesticides and chemical fertilizers, which have taken

government regulators in a manner comparable to other industries.¹

The public, regulatory agencies, scientists, and health professionals have growing recognition of the need for a more complete accounting of the human and environmental health impact of an industrialized food system.¹⁻⁵ In this article, we first describe the relationship of the food system to reproductive health, which we define



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