



Press Release

The Economic Costs of Poor Nutrition

ANGELA KUCK | MARCH 9, 2022

Poor nutrition is more than a health care concern; it also has tremendous, multifaceted economic implications. In new research, Director of Human Welfare Policy Tara O'Neill Hayes and Rakeb Asres estimate the economic costs of the four most common nutrition-related chronic diseases among the working-age population.

Key points:

- Poor nutrition is a key risk factor for numerous chronic diseases, most notably obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and as many as 13 types of cancer.
- These diseases reduce a person's likelihood of working, and those who do work are less likely to work full-time and as productively as their peers without chronic disease.
- The economic implications of nutrition-related chronic disease are primarily reduced wages, higher employment costs, and reduced government revenue.
- **This analysis estimates the economic cost of the four nutrition-related chronic diseases among 18 to 64-year-olds at \$16 trillion from 2011-2020 (or nearly 9 percent of gross domestic product annually) after accounting for direct health care costs, lost productivity, and lost wages.**

[Read the analysis](#)