

# On the Brink: The Importance of Emergency Savings on Maintaining Healthy Behaviors

Angyelisa Hernandez, Michelle Torrico, William Hernandez, John Billimek, PhD

## INTRODUCTION

- Food insecurity can impede the ability to adhere to health recommendations as decreased income makes access to healthy food options more difficult
- Emergency savings can significantly impact a person's ability to attain or maintain food security, especially in the event of an unexpected crisis
- Arizona Lifestyle Inventory (ALI) assesses 7 behavioral categories that contribute to an individual's adherence to a healthy lifestyle

## METHODS

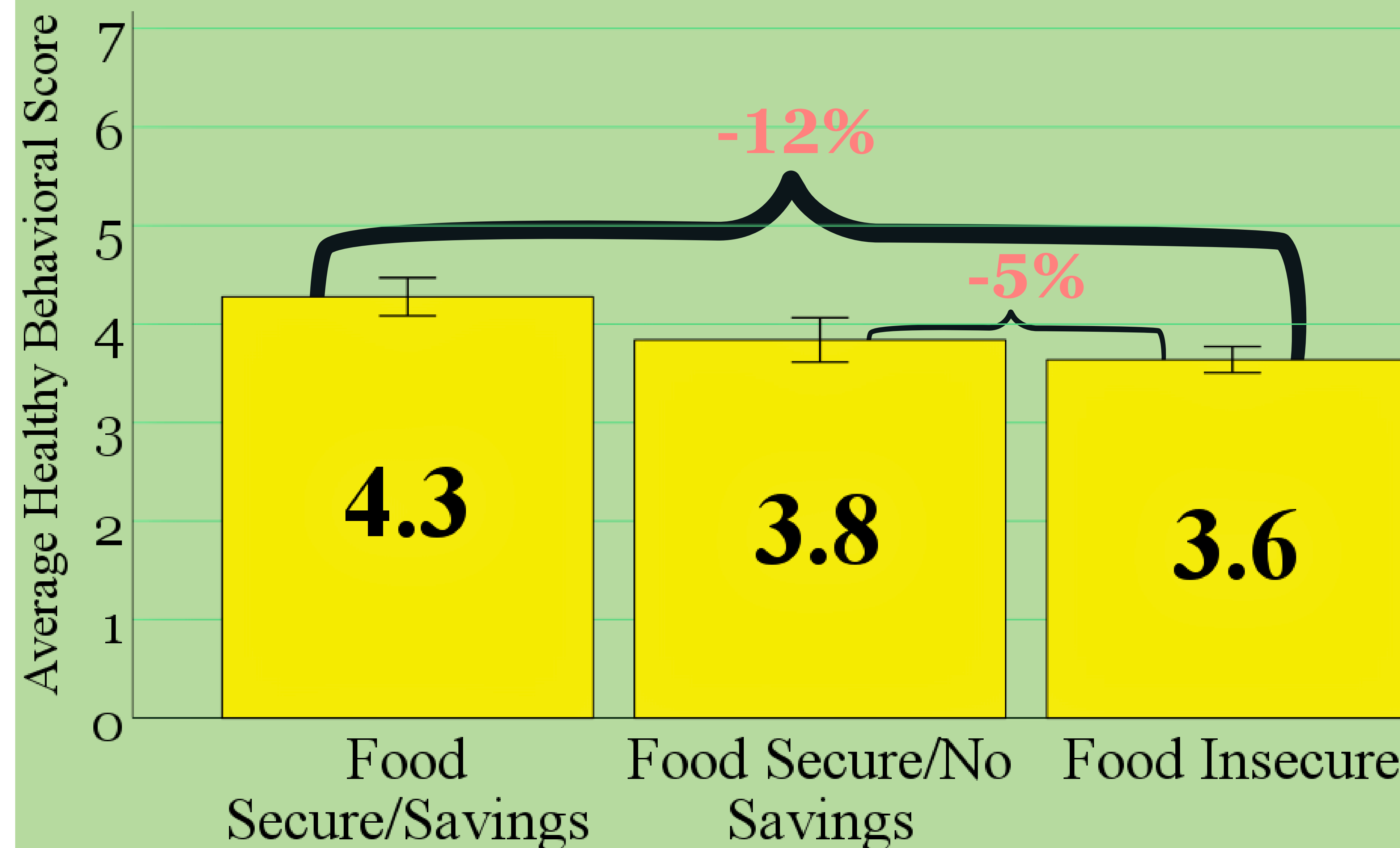
- Data from n=668 Latinx patients, who are part of a larger NIH-funded hypertensive study, from the UCI FQHC (Federally Qualified Health Center) was used
- Data was processed into 7 ALI categories and 3 food secure statuses
- '0' denoted a lack of healthy lifestyle habits, while '7' indicated a significant adherence to healthy lifestyle practices

## PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS

N	668
Age, Mean, (SD), Years	57 (10.3)
Female %	99%
Born Outside the US	99%

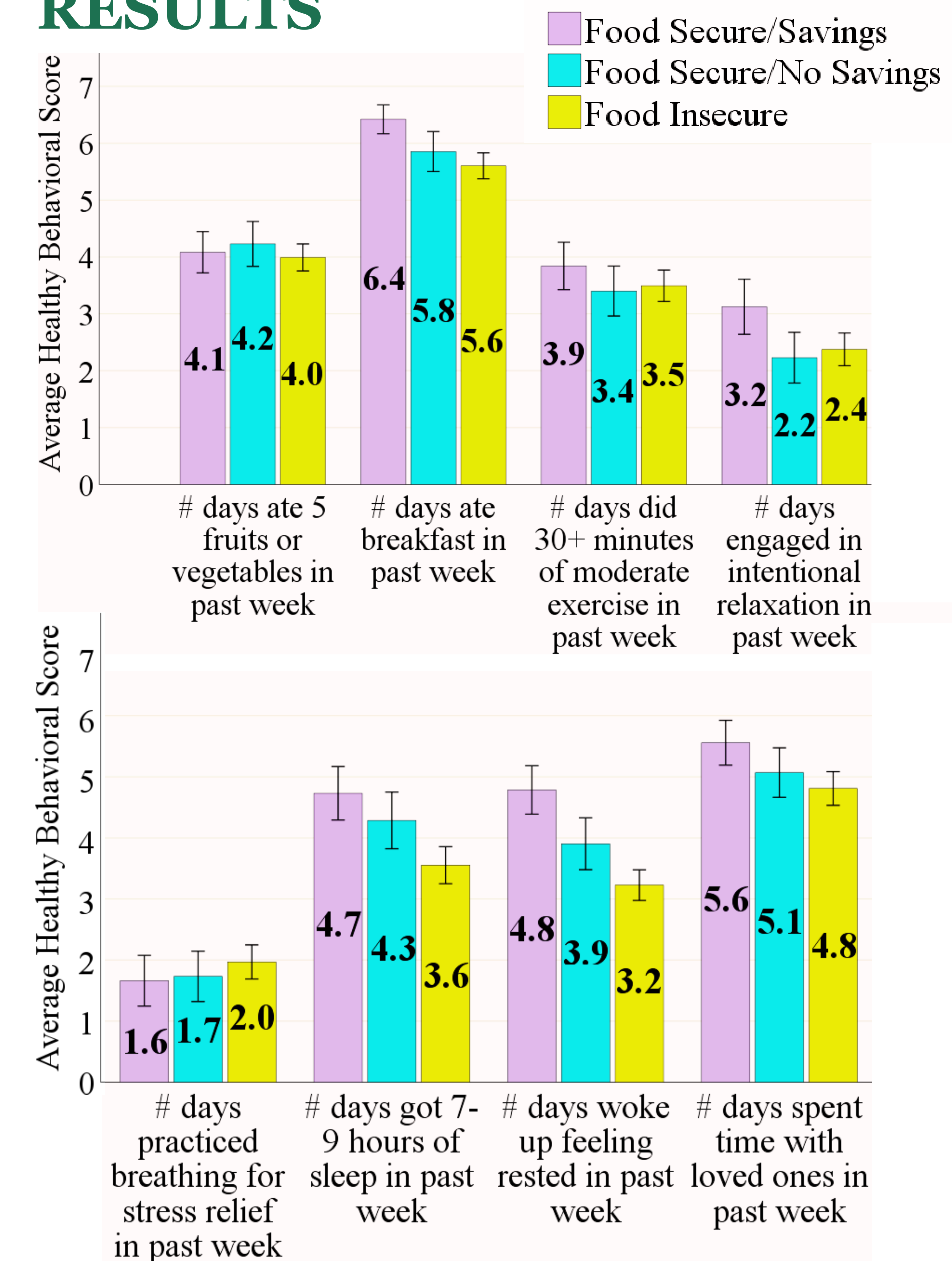
# Latinx Adults with Hypertension see a 12% Reduction in Healthy Behaviors when they Lack Emergency Savings

Latinx adults tend to practice more healthy behaviors when they have economic security



Error bars: 95% CI

## RESULTS



- 148 patients are Food Secure with Savings, 158 Food Secure without Savings, and 355 are Food Insecure
- Significant differences between Food Secure With Emergency Savings and Food Secure with No Emergency Savings

## DISCUSSION

- Emergency savings are crucial for adhering to health recommendations, whether food insecure or food secure
- These findings underscore flaws in current food security policies and emphasize the vital role of community partnerships in improving food security in low-income areas where emergency savings are scarce

