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## IMPACT OF NUTRITIONAL ACCESS ON OBESITY AND DIABETES: “FOOD SWAMPS” AND “FOOD DESERTS”

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Availability of various foods is important determinant of what people buy and eat, thus impacting on their health. This is illustrated in our studies of two cities: one larger; i.e., Cleveland, Ohio, replete in "food swamps," and one smaller; i.e., Madison, Wisconsin, site of many "food deserts." Food swamp = readily-accessible convenience stores and fast food restaurants; food desert = difficult-to-buy fresh fruits and vegetables. Food swamps and deserts often co-exist. Availability of nutritious food is one determinant of people's diet; others are cost, cultural, racial, ethnic, habits, and inadequate transportation in poverty areas. "Fast foods" in restaurants and "junk foods" in convenience stores, rich in carbohydrates, fats and sugar, are associated with increased risk of being overweight/obese and increased prevalence of type 2 diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and cancer. Recent WHO European Region report indicated, "poor diet, overweight and obesity contribute to a large proportion of cardiovascular diseases and cancer, the two main killers in the Region." Using food provider interviews in Cleveland, and Public Health Service and UW Applied Pop. Lab. data in Madison, employing GIS (Geographic Information System), food swamps in the former and food deserts in the latter have been mapped, found corresponding to areas of poverty, mainly inhabited by people of color. To emphasize complexity of poor diet choices, a refrigerated 40-foot trailer offering fresh fruits and vegetables in 8 food deserts in Madison was unsustainable after 2 years because consumer interest declined.

### Biography

Don Schalch completed his M.D. at the Univ. of Cincinnati, OH, in 1960 and medicine residency and fellowship in endocrinology at the Univ. of Rochester (U of R), NY, and Washington Univ. in St. Louis, MO in 1964, then joining the U of R faculty. He was a visiting scientist at Erasmus Univ. in Rotterdam and at Kantonsspital in Zürich in 1972-73, and joined the Univ. of Colorado Medical School faculty in Denver, CO in 1974. In 1982, he became chief of endocrinology at the Univ. of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health. He has published 101 papers, was reviewer for 3 journals, and became emeritus professor in 1999.

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