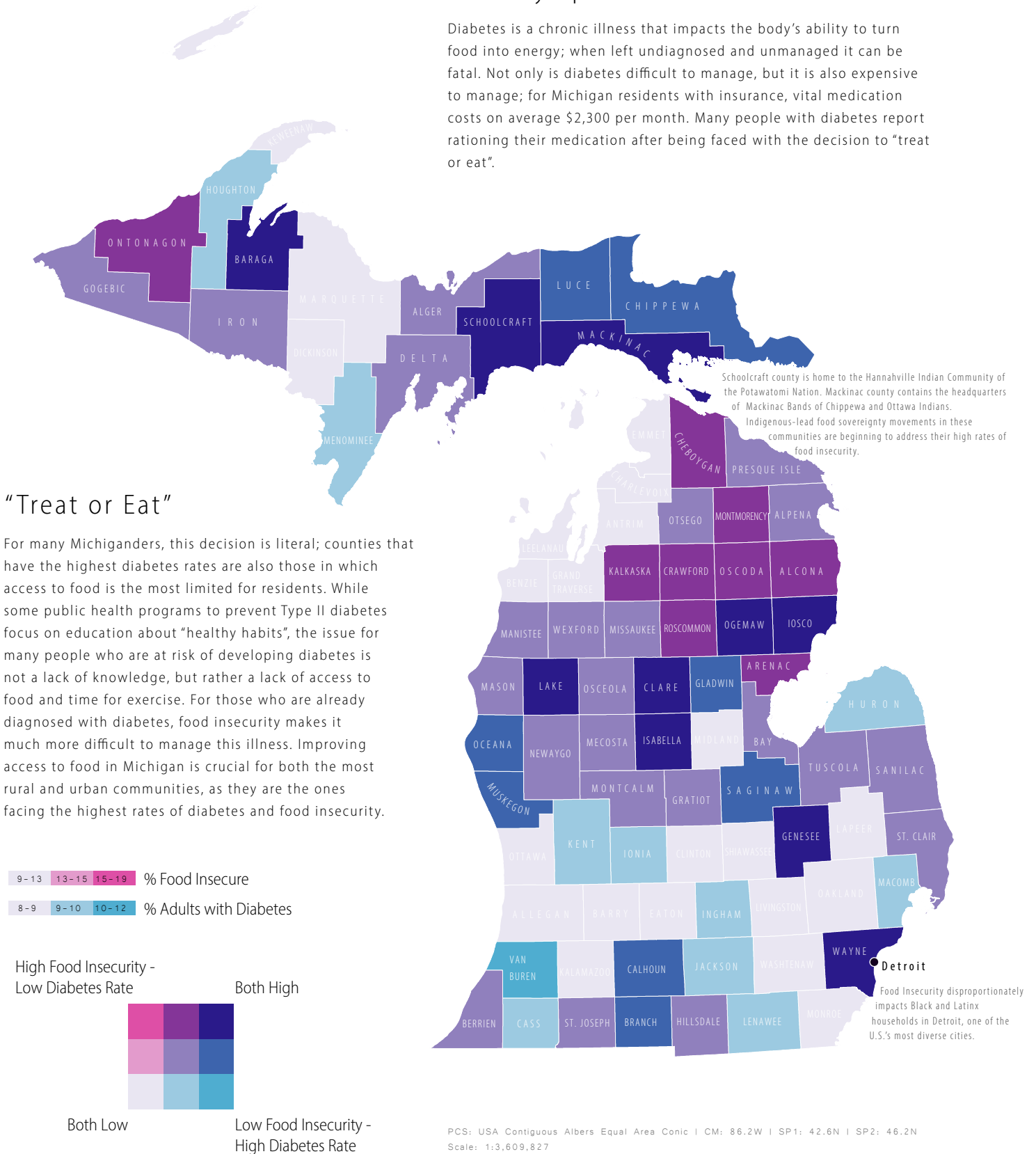


Diabetes and Food Insecurity in Michigan

A Costly Epidemic

Diabetes is a chronic illness that impacts the body's ability to turn food into energy; when left undiagnosed and unmanaged it can be fatal. Not only is diabetes difficult to manage, but it is also expensive to manage; for Michigan residents with insurance, vital medication costs on average \$2,300 per month. Many people with diabetes report rationing their medication after being faced with the decision to "treat or eat".



"Treat or Eat"

For many Michiganders, this decision is literal; counties that have the highest diabetes rates are also those in which access to food is the most limited for residents. While some public health programs to prevent Type II diabetes focus on education about "healthy habits", the issue for many people who are at risk of developing diabetes is not a lack of knowledge, but rather a lack of access to food and time for exercise. For those who are already diagnosed with diabetes, food insecurity makes it much more difficult to manage this illness. Improving access to food in Michigan is crucial for both the most rural and urban communities, as they are the ones facing the highest rates of diabetes and food insecurity.