



## Tips for a healthy lifestyle



Currently, there is no cure for HIV or AIDS, but you can improve the quality of your life by maintaining a positive attitude and a healthy lifestyle.

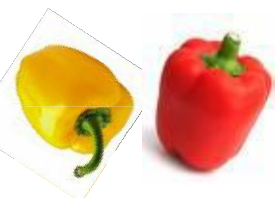
Some healthy lifestyle changes you can make include:

- Following appropriate medical interventions to treat infections
- Choosing to eat healthy food
- Managing stress in positive ways
- Reducing or stopping smoking and drinking habits
- Engaging in regular weight resistance exercise
- Trying out natural or alternative therapies.
- All of these therapies work together to help your immune system fight HIV

A good diet provides the correct nutrients that your body requires to fight disease and poor health.

Diet is especially important when taking combination therapy for HIV infection. In many instances it can be the difference between success and failure with these medications, since **many HIV medications have special eating requirements for their absorption in the body.**

Dietary management can also help alleviate some of the side effects of these medications.



## Vitamin Supplementation

Vitamins are essential to life. Among other things, they help to build and maintain a functional and healthy immune (defence) system.

The following vitamins are particularly beneficial:



### ***Vitamin A***

Plays a role in the production of various immune system cells. Beware of supplements containing more than 25 000 IU of vitamin A per day.

### ***Vitamin B6 (Pyridoxine)***

Plays an important role in immunity. It may be useful for people with HIV to supplement with a B complex multivitamin plus extra vitamin B6.

### ***Vitamin B12 (Cobalamin)***

Is important in maintaining the health of the nervous system and spinal cord. Vitamin B12 is found in red meat and dairy products.

### ***Folate (Folic acid)***

Found in green leafy vegetables, this vitamin maintains the health of the immune system. Supplementation with 1-2mg of folate per day may be a consideration, especially in patients taking drug therapy.

### ***Vitamin C (Ascorbic acid)***



Helps strengthen the immune system. Recommendations of vitamin C supplementation for HIV range from 1000 to 10 000 mg per day.



## Food Safety



In HIV/AIDS, the immune system's capacity to fight off infections is diminished, so foods must be kept as safe and germ-free as possible. Some tips:

- Wash food before preparation
- Cook food thoroughly and serve hot
- Thaw frozen foods in the refrigerator or microwave
- Avoid raw foods, especially raw meat
- Do not use foods that have passed their expiry date
- Never eat foods that look rotten or mouldy



### **Shopping for food**

For people with AIDS, it is especially important to read food labels and select foods that pose the least risk of food poisoning.

### **Eating/cooking at home**

Improper food handling or preparation causes most cases of food poisoning in the home.

### **Eating out**

Restaurants, like grocery stores, must follow certain sanitation guidelines.

### **General**

Boil all water before drinking. Drink only beverages made with boiled water or canned or carbonated bottled drinks.

You can keep yourself safe through basic food hygiene know-how.