



NUTRITION FOR
PEOPLE LIVING WITH

HIV/ AIDS



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WHAT IS HIV/AIDS?

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is a virus that attacks the body's immune system. If HIV is not treated, it can lead to Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS). Once a person gets HIV, they have it for life, but it can be controlled with medical care and treatment.

HIV is a sexually transmitted disease. It can also be spread by blood through shared needles and from mother to child during pregnancy, birth, or breastfeeding. It can't be transmitted by air, water or saliva. An estimated 1.2 million people in the United States had HIV at the end of 2018, according to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Of those people, about 14%, or 1 in 7, did not know they had HIV.

This guide will provide an overview of the general nutrition/food recommendations for those with HIV and AIDS.

Please note that nutrition needs for HIV/AIDS vary from person to person. Talk to your Registered Dietitian or other healthcare provider to learn which foods are best for you and your symptoms.



NUTRITION FOR HIV/AIDS

Good nutrition is a key part of living well with HIV and AIDS. There is no specific diet or eating pattern that's known to help prevent, treat, or cure HIV/AIDS. Nutrition therapy is focused on maintaining your health, supporting your immune system and managing symptoms. Eating well also helps your body build and keep muscle and allows medications to work better and helps reduce their side effects.

You can support your immune system by eating a basic healthy diet and drinking plenty of fluids. The MyPlate Guidelines recommend that you eat a variety of foods from all the food groups. This will ensure that you get the nutrients you need for good health. Fruits, vegetables, whole-grains, dairy, and protein foods are the food groups to focus on.

The next page includes an overview of the food groups and the foods to focus on in each group.

FOOD GROUP GUIDE

This guide provides an overview of the food groups and the foods to focus on in each group.



GRAINS

Aim for ½ of the grains you eat to be whole grains. These include whole grain breads and cereals, oatmeal, brown rice, whole wheat tortillas, quinoa, couscous and barley.

VEGETABLES

Aim to eat as many colors and different types of vegetables as possible. Vegetables may be raw, cooked, frozen or canned. Rinse canned vegetables before consuming to remove excess sodium (salt).



FRUIT

Eat a variety of fruits with different colors for a good balance of nutrients. If you drink juice, opt for 100% juice. Focus on eating whole fruits before fruit juice.

DAIRY

The dairy group includes milk, yogurt and cheese. Dairy foods are a good source of calcium, which helps keep our bones strong.



PROTEIN

Choose lean choices of meats such as chicken, turkey, or fish. Fish are rich in healthy fat (omega-3) including salmon, sardines and mackerel. For plant-based options, choose eggs, nuts (almonds, peanuts and walnuts), seeds, beans, lentils, and tofu.

OILS & FATS

Choose vegetable sources of oil, such as olive oil. These provide healthy fats that are good for your heart and brain health. Foods like butter and coconut oil are high in saturated fat and should be eaten in moderation.



FOOD SAFETY

Food safety is important for preventing foodborne illness. The table below provides an overview of the steps you should take to ensure food safety while preparing and cooking meals.



CLEAN

Wash your hands, tools, and counters often when working with food.



SEPARATE

Keeping foods separate will prevent germs from spreading. One way to do this is to keep raw meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs apart from foods that are ready-to-eat, such as fruits, vegetables, and breads.



COOK

Avoid raw or undercooked eggs, including hollandaise sauce or Caesar dressing as these contain raw or uncooked eggs. Avoid raw/undercooked meats including sushi, oysters and shellfish.

Use a food thermometer to ensure foods are cooked properly.

Steaks and Roasts: Internal temperature of 145°F

Ground Meats: Internal temperature of 160°F

Whole Chicken and Turkey: Internal temperature of 165°F

Eggs: Until the yolks are firm at 145°F

Fish: Until it begins to flake at 145°F



CHILL

Refrigerate or freeze meat, poultry, eggs, seafood, produce, and other foods that may spoil within hours of buying or cooking.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Exercising regularly can support your immune system. Some benefits of exercising include: decreases body fat and increases muscle, lowers bad cholesterol while raising good cholesterol, increases appetite, promotes regular bowel movements and improves self-esteem.

It is recommended to do 30 minutes of aerobic activity (walking, biking, swimming, etc.) five times per week while also participating in muscle-strengthening activities (push-ups, squats, bicep curls) twice a week.



OPEN ARMS IS HERE TO HELP

YOUR OPEN ARMS MENU

You have the option to select from any of the menus that we have available at Open Arms. Each of our menus features important nutrients that you need to manage your illness. If you are experiencing other health conditions or side effects, our nutrition team members are available to help you choose a menu that best fits your needs.

OTHER RESOURCES

For more information about HIV/AIDS and nutrition, scan the QR codes or visit these webpages:



HIV.gov - <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/living-healthy-with-hiv/taking-care-of-yourself/food-safety-and-nutrition>



HIV.va.gov <https://www.hiv.va.gov/patient/daily/diet/index.asp>



My Plate <https://www.myplate.gov/>

GET IN TOUCH WITH OPEN ARMS

Open Arms has a team of Registered Dietitians that provide free-of-cost nutrition education and counseling to Open Arms clients over the phone. If you have a question about your meals or want to schedule a one-on-one call, contact the Open Arms nutrition team!

Our Registered Dietitians can help:

- Recommend a menu based on your needs and preferences
- Answer your questions about food, nutrition, and health
- Provide nutrition coaching to support you in reaching your health goals
- Suggest additional food resources if you need them
- Give you meal and snack ideas according to your likes, dislikes, and medical needs
- Provide nutrition information about Open Arms meals, such as calorie, nutrient, and allergen information



612-767-7333 Ask to speak with a registered dietitian



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