

the time they are one year old. Very spicy foods are however not suitable for children before the age of one. Care must be taken to ensure that the child eats a variety of locally available foods. Healthy snacks like sandwiches, cheese and fruit between meals can be helpful to increase food intake. Older children and teenagers often have strong food likes and dislikes, which could lead to poor nutrition. Healthy food choices for children older than 5 years are the same as for adults (*See Food Choices*). Growing increases the child's nutritional needs over and above the needs imposed by HIV/AIDS. As a child gets older portion sizes must be increased to supply the extra nutrient for growth needs. Children are often very active and use a lot of energy during the day. Special care should be taken to make enough food available to meet all the nutritional requirements. During and after infections the child should receive more food.

..Water, water, water..

The child with HIV/AIDS may often have diarrhoea or vomiting. Both diarrhoea and vomiting cause a loss of water from the child's body. This is called **dehydration**. Because of their smaller bodies **children become dehydrated more quickly than adults**. Diarrhoea and dehydration is a major cause of death in young children in developing countries. It is very important to replace any water that is lost during diarrhoea or vomiting. After every vomit or loose stool the child should be given some **water and salt replacement** made with the **homemade recipe** below.

ORAL REHYDRATION THERAPY

A homemade recipe for water replacement

- Use **1 litre clean and safe water** (*see page 21*)
- Add **8 level teaspoons sugar**
- Add **½ teaspoon table salt**
- Mix well
- Store in a clean and covered container
- Keep the solution in a cool place it
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MAKE A FRESH SOLUTION EVERY DAY

Other fluids may also be given to the child as long as it is **clean and safe**. Thin porridge, water,

soup, tea, or rice-water all help to prevent dehydration.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF

Nutrition is very important for all people. For people living with HIV/AIDS it becomes an important part of their treatment. Healthy ways of eating were discussed earlier in the guidelines, but people need more than food. Food nourishes the body, but the mind must also be healthy. When one is worried and under stress the immune system is weakened. Here are some guidelines for living a healthier life with or without HIV/AIDS.

Be kind to yourself. Try to keep a positive attitude. We know that feeling good is part of being healthy.

Get regular exercise:

- Exercise helps to build muscle. This is important to prevent weight loss.
- Do not put too much stress on your body when you are not feeling well, though. Take it slow when you have diarrhoea, a cough or fever.
- Exercise helps people to feel better about themselves.

Try not to smoke:

- Smoke from cigarettes harms the lungs. Smoking causes more lung infections which can be very serious with HIV/AIDS.
- If you really cannot stop, at least smoke less.

Get enough rest and sleep.

Try not to worry too much. Stress can harm your immune system.

Get good advice:

- If you have any medical problems, ask for advice from health workers. Many of the problems can be treated.
- The sooner you seek help, the easier treatment can be.

Avoid unnecessary medicines:

- Medicines often have unwanted side effects.
- Medicines can interfere with food and nutrition.
- Take medicines prescribed by health workers only.

Avoid alcohol:

- Alcohol harms the liver.
- Alcohol can cause you to be more vulnerable to infections.
- Alcohol destroys vitamins in the body.
- Combined with medicines it can increase the unhealthy effect on the liver.
- Too much alcohol can make it more difficult to practice safe sex.

Find support

The **AIDS Helpline** of the **Department of Health** offers a **24-hour toll-free advice service** for people with HIV/AIDS and their carers.

AIDS Helpline
0800-012-322

If you need more support in any area, there are some important contacts at the end of the guidelines. Why not volunteer? As a person living with HIV/AIDS, you may be able to help others.

CARING FOR SOMEONE WITH HIV/AIDS

People with HIV/AIDS often need help when they are not feeling well. There are many loving and kind people around who care enough to lend a hand. Here are some tips for those family members, partners, friends, buddies, neighbours, colleagues and others who support the person living with HIV/AIDS.

REMEMBER: HIV cannot be transmitted by food or drink. It is safe to share cups, plates, knives and forks.

- **Be gentle.** Do not force the person to eat. Giving too much food at one time may cause them to refuse.
- **Be encouraging.** Go with the flow. If they want to have food of their choice at any time of the day, this should be accommodated where possible.
- **Help where you can.** Help to clean the kitchen if you cannot help with food. Help to tidy the house when they are feeling unwell. Help may also be welcome to mind the children, mow the lawn or do the laundry or shopping.
- **Visit often.**
- **Invite him or her** over for dinner or take them out on a picnic.
- **Keep a watchful eye.** Do not pry, but look around to see if the hygiene needs attention or if there is enough food in the house.
- **If they are not feeling well,** cook extra food and take some to them.
- **Look after yourself.** Carers have to be healthy and strong too. Make sure you have support for yourself too.
- **Get enough rest.** Take some time off. If you are too tired you are not much use for the person you are caring for. Get some help for yourself if you can. Ask a friend or family member to stand in for you, or arrange to take turns.
- **Get some support.** There are many people out there who know what you are feeling. The organisations listed at the end of the document also offer support for people who are caring for people living with HIV.
- **Touch the person you are caring for. Touching shows compassion.**

Addendum I HIV/AIDS HELP ORGANISATIONS
