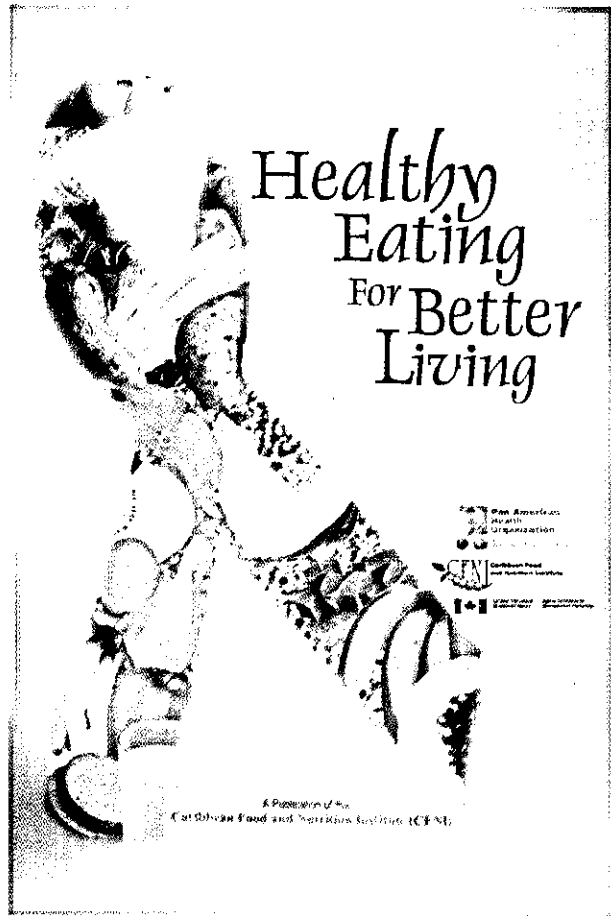


CARIBBEAN FOOD GROUPS

A GUIDE TO MEAL PLANNING FOR HEALTHY EATING



Dietary Tips for Coping with Problems that could affect your Nutritional Health



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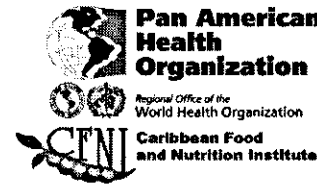


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HEALTHY EATING FOR BETTER LIVING

**Dietary Tips for Coping with Problems that Could
Affect your Nutritional Health**

A Booklet on Good Nutrition and Healthy
Eating for People Living with HIV/AIDS



Canadian International
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A Specialised Centre of the
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Neurological Impairment

- Change texture or consistency of food according to child's ability to tolerate.
- Assist with feeding as needed.

Illness of Parent or Caregiver

- Seek help from other family members, neighbours, friends who are willing and able to help you with buying and preparing food or even feeding the child.

Food and Water Safety

- Pay careful attention to the source of the water.
- Make sure that everyone knows and uses the basic principles of food and water safety, including when preparing and storing infant formula.
- Remember the five keys to food safety from the World

Health Organization (WHO):

- Keep Clean
- Separate raw and cooked
- Cook thoroughly
- Keep food at safe temperature
- Use safe water and raw materials

Contents

Introduction	i
Acknowledgements	ii
• Dietary Tips for Coping With Problems that • Could Affect Your Nutritional Health	1
• For Adults	
• Loss of Appetite	2
• Feeling Tired and Have no Energy	3
• Diarrhoea	4
• Constipation	5
• Mouth Pain or Sore Throat	6
• Nausea and Vomiting	7
• Food Has No Taste	8
• Heartburn and Feeling Bloated	9
• Dry Mouth	10
• Feeling Full Too Quickly	10
• Don't Like Certain Foods	11
• Don't Want to Eat Anymore	11
• Don't Like Milk	11
• Can't Drink Milk Anymore	12
• Fatty Foods Make You Sick	13
• Vegetables Taste Bland	13
• Night Sweats and Fever	14

Especially For Infants and Children

Craving Sweets and Sugary Snacks15
Poor Appetite or Food Refusal15
Diarrhoea16
Nausea and/or Vomiting17
Lactose Intolerance17
Neurological Impairment18
Illness of Parent or Caregiver18
Food and Water Safety18

Nausea and/or Vomiting

- Offer medications with food (unless advised otherwise) to help reduce the nausea.
- Avoid high fat or sweet foods.
- Bland, dry, salty and cold foods are often better tolerated.
- Offer beverages between meals.
- Encourage the child to eat slowly while sitting up.
- Replace fluids and electrolytes if vomiting is present – use commercially packaged (WHO or other) rehydration products.
- Seek advice from your doctor about choice and use of medication.

Lactose Intolerance

Lactose restriction can result in many important foods being left out of the growing child's diet.

- Ensure that this is a confirmed diagnosis.
- Monitor dietary intake and make adjustments as necessary.
- You may have to get a prescription for a calcium supplement.

- Limit time spent on meals and snacks.
- Offer small portions.
- Praise small efforts with non-food rewards.
- Ensure family dynamics provide positive support during meal times.

Diarrhoea

Infants

- Ensure that formula is not over-concentrated. Mix according to directions, or
- Seek professional help with formula selection.
- Use commercially packaged (WHO or other) re-hydration products.

Children

- Avoid offering extremely sweet fluids as these could make the diarrhoea worse.
- Offer small frequent meals.
- Seek professional help with modifying the diet
- Use commercially packaged (WHO or other) re-hydration products.

Introduction

Healthy eating for better living is important for everyone. It is the backbone for being in good nutritional status as well as living healthier. For persons living with HIV, healthy eating is even more important because the virus can affect your nutritional status and health which depend on more than just having enough quality food to provide you with the needed energy and nutrients. Your nutritional health also includes using clean and safe water, and paying attention to food hygiene and food safety. Also important is matching your food choices and intake with your anti-retrovirals and other drugs, as well as managing any problems that you may experience.

Since the widespread distribution of the 2002 publication "**Healthy Eating for Better Living, A Caribbean Handbook**", many users have provided us with invaluable feedback. This has resulted in the creation of 7 booklets for easier use by HIV-positive persons and your care-providers. We have kept part of the original title, "Healthy Eating for Better Living" and each booklet now has one of the following subtitles:

- (1) What is Good Nutrition for HIV?
- (2) About Nutrition and HIV
- (3) Planning A Healthy Diet

- (4) Keeping Healthy and Living with HIV
- (5) Dietary Tips for Coping with Problems that Could Affect Your Nutritional Health
- (6) Food Safety and Hygiene
- (7) Getting the Best from Your Food and Drugs

Each booklet allows you to focus on one topic at a time. However, we suggest that you keep all of them handy as quick references that can help to make life and living better. We hope that you will continue to find the information useful. Remember that the information provided in these booklets is not intended to be used in place of any individualized treatment you will require from your doctor, dietetics or any other healthcare professional. In addition, mention of any product does not mean any expressed or implied endorsement. If you have questions or need additional information, we encourage you to consult your doctor, nutrition or dietetics professional or nurse.

Dr. Fitzroy Henry
Director, CFNI

Craving Sweets and Sugary Snacks

It's okay to satisfy your urge occasionally but remember that your body needs nutrients that are not found in sweets. Therefore:



- • Be careful about the amount and how often you eat these less nutritious sweets instead of foods that contain more nutrients.

Especially for Infants and Children

The following tips are suggested to help with keeping up the nutrition of infants and children who are having these problems:

Poor Appetite or Food Refusal

- Ensure symptoms or neurological problems are treated.
- Offer small frequent feeds and snacks.
- Make every bite count with nutrient dense foods.
- Take advantage of times of day when appetite is better.
- Offer regularly scheduled meals and snacks. Discourage frequent snacking especially non-nutritious food items.

- Sprinkle some cheese on top after cooking.
- Add grated, shredded or chopped vegetables to stews, one-pot dishes, gravy, soup or other mixed dishes.
- Try not to overcook certain vegetables. You may find that you will prefer the flavour and texture.
- Increase your serving size from the fruit group because these two groups provide similar nutrients.

Night Sweats and Fever

These situations could mean loss of body fluid in a relatively short time and this could be dangerous. You will need to:

- Contact your doctor or health care provider.
- Drink at least eight cups of fluid every day.
- Keep a glass of water at your bedside within easy reach.



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Fatty Foods Make You Sick

Although fat is an excellent source of calories, fat can be difficult to digest sometimes. If this is your situation:

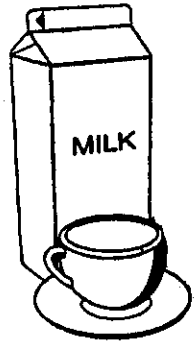
- Make a special effort to use foods with less fat.
- Use less added fat in cooking so that your food is not greasy.
- Try baking, broiling, barbecuing your meats, poultry and fish.
- Remove the skin from chicken, other fatty poultry like duck, and other meats before cooking.
- Eat any fatty food when it is warm or hot. Generally high fat foods are less tolerated when they are cold.



Vegetables Taste Bland

Vegetables are nutritious but like other foods, taste is important. If you find that you are having problems eating your vegetables because they taste bland, then:

- Season them with fresh or dried herbs or spices that you like. You will be amazed at the change in taste.
- Mix your favourite vegetables with some of the less favourite or even different ones.



- Use the "double-strength" milk – See Booklet No. 4, "Keeping Healthy and Living With HIV".
- Add some milk to a cooked dish like macaroni pie, mashed provision, breads or cakes instead of drinking the milk.
- Try a by-product such as cheese, ice cream and yoghurt.

Can't Drink Milk Anymore

Some people become lactose intolerant as a result of HIV. You may develop bloating, gas, cramps, burping or diarrhoea after drinking milk. You may not have to stop using milk or milk products completely. You should check with your doctor if you are having problems digesting milk or milk products. If you are lactose intolerant:

- Use either lactose-reduced milk, commercial rice milk or soy milk as an alternative.
- Try drinking milk slowly with a meal
- Try using chocolate or whole/full cream milk.
- Eat small amounts of yoghurt or firm cheeses.
- Use buttermilk.

Dietary Tips for Coping With Problems that Could Affect Your Nutritional Health

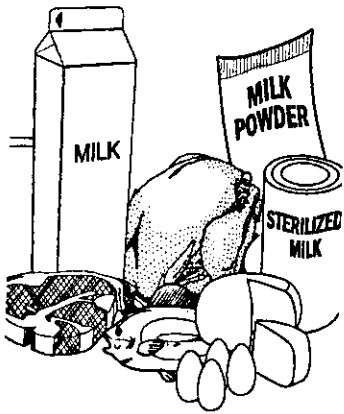
When you are HIV-positive, it may not always be easy to follow a healthy eating plan because you are likely to experience many problems that could make it difficult for you to eat. Some of these are feeling tired, sick, sad or anxious; having a hard time chewing or digesting food or developing intolerance to milk. Diarrhoea makes it hard for your body to absorb nutrients. Some foods may no longer be appealing or they may make you nauseous and feel to vomit. You may lose your appetite as part of the normal process of infections or as a side effect of the drugs you are taking or because you feel stressed, sad or depressed. Your doctor, social worker or other healthcare professional can help. Don't wait. Remember, it is important that you get enough nutrients to help your immune system. **It's important that you eat enough.**

Coping with problems because of HIV can be difficult but do your best. This booklet lists some of the problems you may

experience and what you can do to cope. Some coping tips are also included for problems that infants and children may have.

For Adults

Loss of Appetite



- Eat small nutritious meals often.
- Eat your favourite, nutritious foods more often.
- Drink after eating, not before or while you are eating.
- Eat foods that are especially rich in nutrients or drink one of the commercial supplements.
- Take advantage of the times when your appetite is better and eat a little more.
- Be flexible with your mealtimes and food choices. It is okay to have cooked food for breakfast if that is what you feel like eating.
- Make each mealtime a pleasant experience. Eat with friends and family. Set an attractive table or plan a picnic sometimes.
- Play and enjoy your favourite music while eating.

Don't Like Certain Foods

Sometimes you may find that you cannot tolerate certain foods that you are in the habit of eating. If this happens to you:

- Choose other foods that you like from the same food group
- Ask your diet counselor to help you choose foods from other food groups that will give you similar nutrients if you find that you have to omit an entire food group.
- Try tolerating the least-liked foods on the days when you feel well. You may find that you can tolerate them at these times.

Don't Want to Eat Meat Anymore

Meat is good but you may find that you do not like it anymore. If you feel this way:

- Eat poultry, fish, eggs, milk, cheese or other dairy products if it is only red meat that you can no longer tolerate.
- Eat some legumes so that you can take in some protein.

Don't Like Milk

You may not like milk for a variety of reasons but you may be able to tolerate it. You can:

- Add a small amount to a hot or cold beverage as a flavouring.

Dry Mouth



If you experience dryness in your mouth:

- Moisten foods by adding extra sauce or gravy.
- Reduce or avoid salty foods.
- Drink fluids frequently, including sips of fizzy drinks.
- Moisten lips with petroleum jelly or lip balm and maintain good oral hygiene.

Feeling Full Too Quickly

If you feel full too quickly:

- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Choose foods that are rich in nutrients.
- Eat slowly and chew foods.
- Avoid or reduce fatty and fried foods. These take longer to digest.
- Avoid filling up with water, coffee, tea or other calorie-free drinks.
- Keep nutritious snack foods handy.

- Keep easy-to-prepare or convenience foods handy for quick cooking.
- Keep plenty of nutritious snack foods on hand so you will have something handy if you feel like eating.
- Try to take a daily walk before a meal. Exercise improves appetite, even light exercise is fine.
- Avoid alcohol, alcoholic drinks, diet drinks and low calorie foods. They could dull your appetite and rob your body of important nutrients.

Feeling Tired and Have No Energy

- Accept offers of help from friends to assist with cooking. Don't hesitate to ask for help.
- Store leftovers safely for later use. See Booklet No. 6, "Food Safety and Hygiene".
- Cook extras when you feel well. Freeze the extras in serving sizes for times when you have less energy. Reheat only enough for one meal or snack.
- Use convenience, easy to prepare foods like canned or already-cooked foods which need less effort to prepare.
- Sip high protein drinks throughout the day.
- Use disposables as much as possible so you will have less dishes to wash.

- Take your favourite nutritional supplement.
- Remember that tiredness may be the result of anaemia. Consult with your health worker.
- Rest as much as you can and be kind to yourself.

Diarrhoea

Prescription drugs, infections, stress and high doses of vitamins and minerals can all cause diarrhoea. Certain foods may also make it worse when your intestines are sensitive or when food is too rich. Diarrhoea is a serious problem. Don't wait. Contact your doctor or health care provider. It is important to find out what is causing it as quickly as possible. **The biggest immediate problem with diarrhoea is the loss of water or dehydration.** If you have diarrhoea:

- Drink as much and as often as possible. However, *do not drink prune juice, alcohol, soft drinks, very sweet drinks, coffee, chocolate or tea.*
- Eat vegetables like pumpkin, carrots, callaloo, tomatoes and fruits like bananas, paw paw, mangoes to help replace some of the potassium you lost. *Be careful not to eat too much to make the diarrhoea worse.* Monitor your tolerance.
- Cut down on your intake of high fat foods if you think that fat is the problem. Remember that fat in the diet is a good energy source and you should not cut it out of your diet unless it is absolutely necessary.



- Eat foods with a variety of textures.
- Try eating strong smelling foods.
- Use more herbs and spices on your food. Stronger flavours can be more appealing. Experiment with different seasonings to perk up the taste and smell of food, including vegetables.
- Marinate meats or fish in fruit juice or soy sauce to improve flavour.
- Eat protein foods cold or at room temperature.
- Add fresh or canned fruit to "double-strength" milkshakes or ice cream, if tolerated. See Booklet No. 4, *"Keeping Healthy and Living With HIV"*.

Heartburn and Feeling Bloating

Heartburn or a bloated feeling can affect your appetite. If you experience either condition:

- Eat small meals regularly.
- Avoid or limit gas forming foods such as dried peas and beans, cabbage, cauliflower, corn, breadnut/chataigne, broccoli, cold gassy drinks, and any others that bother you.
- Avoid spicy foods.
- Avoid greasy foods.

- Eat dry foods such as toast or biscuits/crackers especially if the feeling comes on before a meal. This may help to calm the stomach especially before breakfast.
- Eat small, frequent meals. Nausea may be worse when the stomach is empty.
- Limit or avoid very sweet foods.
- Avoid hot, spicy, strong smelling and greasy foods.
- Eat soft, bland foods that are easy to tolerate.
- Avoid unpleasant odours. Stay away from the kitchen when food is cooking. If you cook for yourself, use foods that do not need to be cooked for a long time. Eat in a well-ventilated area.
- Rest between meals but do not lie down. Try to keep your upper body raised for about two hours after eating.
- Check with your doctor or pharmacist about the timing of your medicine.

Food Has No Taste

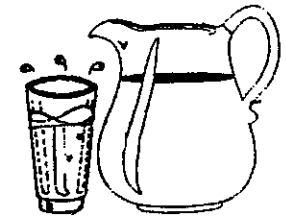
Taste changes can be caused by drug side effects, poor nutrition and infections.

If your food does not taste the way it should, there are some things you can do to make sure you are getting enough nutrients.

- Avoid foods that are high in sugar like soft drinks, jams, jelly, honey and juices with added sugar because they may make diarrhoea worse.
- Reduce your intake of milk and dairy products. Sour or fermented dairy products like yoghurt and buttermilk are often better tolerated.
- Eat starchy foods such as rice, pasta, porridge, green bananas and breads.
- Eat small meals every few hours rather than three large ones.
- Eat foods warm rather than extremes of hot or cold but always ensure that all "hot" foods are heated thoroughly.
- Consult your dietetics professional for advice about appropriate foods.

Constipation

- Eat regularly. Try not to skip meals even if you are not feeling well.
- Drink lots of fluid – about 8 glasses daily. It does not have to be water. Any liquid that you usually drink will do just fine.
- Try to be more active. If you stay in bed for a long time, constipation can get worse.

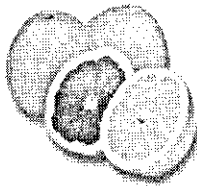


- Eat foods rich in roughage or fibre. Legumes, high fibre cereals, vegetables and fruits are good. Dried fruits, nuts and seeds also provide fibre.
- Speak with your health care provider about your constipation.
- Listen to your body and go to the toilet when you feel the urge.

Mouth Pain or Sore Throat

Most of the opportunistic infections that attack the mouth can be treated with medications. Here are some tips that will help you eat better until you get the infection under control.

- Choose soft, non-irritating foods like eggs, ground meat, baked fish, pasta dishes, tofu, mashed provision, flavoured gelatin, cooked cereals, mashed fruits and cooked vegetables.
- Select moist foods. You can also use extra gravy or sauces, dunk some foods in liquids or soak foods like bread or biscuits in milk to make them less irritating to your mouth.
- Avoid salty, spicy or rough foods like peppers, or chips, or crisps.
- Avoid vinegar and other acid tasting foods, drinks or juices made from citrus like lemon, lime, orange and grapefruit. Drink soothing beverages such as apple juice, fruit nectars and milk if you can.



- Do not drink alcohol.
- Avoid foods like peanut butter that stick to the roof of your mouth.
- Avoid extremely hot or very cold foods. Cool or room temperature foods are more soothing and may taste better.
- Do not smoke or try to smoke as little as possible.
- Be careful with microwaved foods that may be very hot in the middle but feel okay on the outside or the edges.
- Avoid foods that require a lot of chewing or are tough and fibrous.
- Use a straw to help with drinking. This may be easier but be careful not to irritate mouth sores.
- Tilt your head slightly forward or slightly backward. Swallowing may be easier.
- Eat "power-packed" foods to increase nutritional intake. See Booklet No. 4, "Keeping Healthy and Living with HIV."
- Practice good oral hygiene.

Nausea and Vomiting

For most people living with HIV, nausea is a temporary condition. Infections and medication can cause nausea. If you have nausea or vomiting: