

Top 10 Tips to Maintain Health

1. Eat well

Food provides the nutrients you need to stay healthy. All the cells of your body, including immune cells require nutrients to function. You need to get enough calories, protein, vitamins, minerals and fluids every day. Choose a wide variety of wholesome foods that are rich with nutrients. The more foods you restrict the harder it is to get all the nutrients you need.

2. Maintain weight

Sudden, or noticeable weight loss should be investigated. You should get weighed every time you visit your doctor.

3. Maintain muscle mass

Muscle is a key component of body cell mass, and includes all the metabolically active cells of the body. Eat enough protein, and get regular exercise. Without exercise, body cell mass can slowly waste away even though your weight doesn't change.

4. Support the immune system

No matter how well you eat you are at risk of becoming deficient in vitamins and minerals. Take a multivitamin-mineral supplement daily. Sometimes, supplements can impact HIV medication, so be sure to talk with your doctor before choosing your vitamin supplement.

5. Symptoms and side effects of medications

Nausea, vomiting, diarrhea and loss of appetite have a negative effect on your nutritional health and can lead to loss nutrients. Changes in your diet can help treat side effects, and make it easier to stay on medications that are working for you.

6. Be sure your food and water are free of germs that cause infections!

7. Build up your antioxidant defence

HIV causes cell and tissue damage through oxidative stress. Take 500-1000 mg of vitamin C and 400-800 units of vitamin E (**if you are on Amprenivir do not take Vitamin E**)

8. Limit substances that cause harm.

Alcohol decreases immune function, and damages the liver. Street drugs affect brain chemistry, decrease immune function, and are a major cause of malnutrition.

9. Take care of stress

Stress decreases immune function. Sweat lodges, smudging, meditation, Tai Chi, talking circles, massage, and talking with Elders, can all reduce stress.

10. Get information from a reliable source.

If you want to use nutrient supplements or other complementary therapies make sure you get advice from someone who is up to date on HIV and HAART treatment issues.