



**HIV/AIDS QUALITY OF  
CARE INITIATIVE  
(HAQOCI)**



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## **NUTRITIONAL ADVICE IN HIV/AIDS**



**Opportunistic Infection Prevention Clinic  
Clinical Epidemiology Resource & Training Centre  
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When the HIV virus infects a person it destroys the body's immune system. It does this by killing the CD4 cells. These cells are part of the immune system and are the cells that the body uses to defend itself. Their immune systems become weaker and weaker with time.

Persons living with HIV are more likely to contract and die of TB than a healthy person. Diseases such as pneumonia, oesophageal thrush (a fungus that grows in an infected person's throat preventing them from swallowing,

Kaposi's sarcoma (a type of cancer), cryptococcal meningitis (a fungus that causes swelling of the brain lining) are common in people infected with HIV and these are what will eventually kill the person.

However it is known that if a person with HIV takes care of his/her health including good nutrition it can help that person improve his/her quality of life.

Currently there is no known cure for AIDS but nutrition can improve fitness. Malnutrition can worsen an already poor immune system and cause severe weight loss.

A mix of different foods can supply the nutrients needed by the body. By taking care to choose foods that are in season and locally available one can have a diet that is enjoyable, healthy and doesn't cost much.

### 1. Starch e.g. mealie-meal, rice, sorghum.

Eat starchy food with every meal, other food should be eaten with the starch to provide necessary proteins, vitamins and minerals.



### 2.. Beans, peas, cowpeas.



These foods provide the body with proteins needed to build and repair the body and strong muscles. Eat these foods once a day or as often as one can afford.

### 3. Vegetables and fruits everyday



These supply vitamins and minerals that keep the body functioning and the immune system strong. One should eat a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. Vary in colour and type (leaves, fruits and roots). Dark green and orange or red vegetables are best. They help fight infection.



### 4. Eat well cooked meat, poultry and eggs and insects.

These should be eaten as often as one can afford, they supply good quality proteins, extra energy, vitamins and minerals.



### 5 . Fats, oils and sugars

Should be eaten in moderate amounts and provide extra energy. These may worsen diarrhoea if taken in excess.

### 6. Drink lots of clean and safe water.

Water is very important for life and is needed every day, drink about 8 cups of water or fluids per day.

### The following are examples of local foods good for the body.

- Vegetables e.g. muboora, munyemba.
- Fruits e.g. matamba, maroro and mazhanje
- Mugaiwa.
- Dovi.