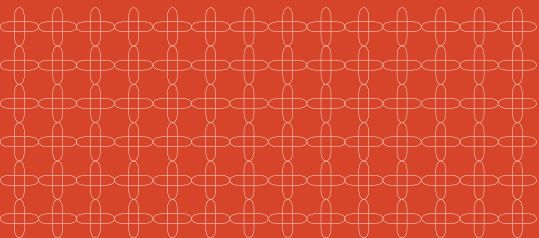


TOP TIPS

For Living Well
with HIV

2007



Introduction

Of the many challenges faced by people living with HIV, one of the most difficult is keeping up to date with important information about the treatment and day-to-day management of HIV disease. New information about the treatment and science of HIV becomes available on a daily basis. Staying current with information can sometimes seem overwhelming.

The following 25 tips have been collected from a range of people, including HIV-positive people, HIV educators, HIV treatments experts, and HIV clinicians, and have been identified as among the most important things people with HIV need to know about managing their health and well-being in 2007.

Of course, the list is not exhaustive. It has been put together as a guide and a trigger for you to find out more information, if you think it's appropriate.

AFAO plans to review and update this information every year or two so that vital changes in information on maximising the health of people with HIV don't go unnoticed. Keep an eye out for future editions.

If you would like more information on any of the issues raised in this booklet, please contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.

01

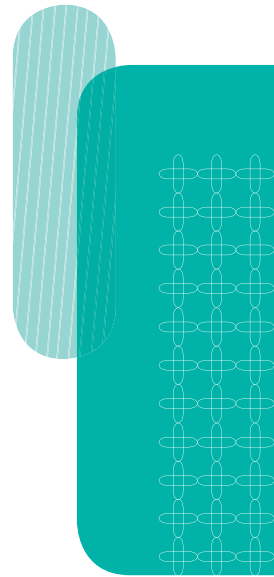
Experienced, Communicative Doctor

Get a doctor who is **easy to talk to**, explains things clearly and has **managed HIV before**.

You can get advice about finding a good doctor from your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.



Doctor



02

Side Effects

Side Effects are the most common difficulty associated with HIV treatments. But there are **ways to reduce them**.

Get advice about diet and complementary therapies that may help reduce side effects.

Also, some new drugs have fewer side effects.



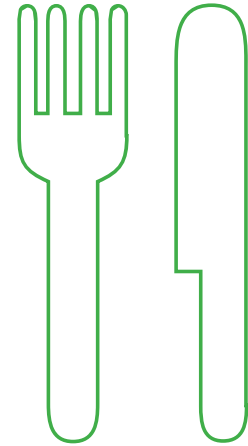
Side Effects

03

Well-Balanced Diet

You can reduce some of the side effects of HIV treatments **by eating a well-balanced diet**.

Ask an HIV dietitian for advice.



Diet

04

Multi-Vitamin

Take a **multi-vitamin daily**.
Ask an HIV dietitian for advice
about your nutritional needs.

Multi-Vitamin

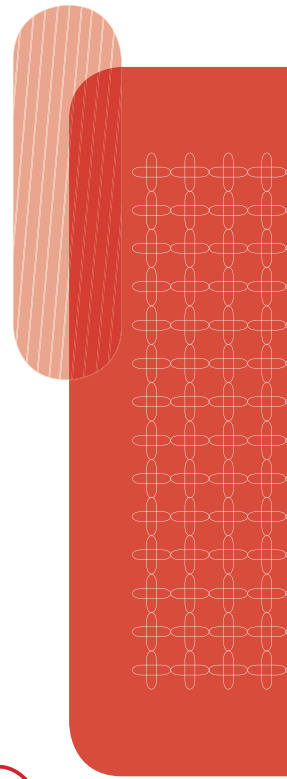
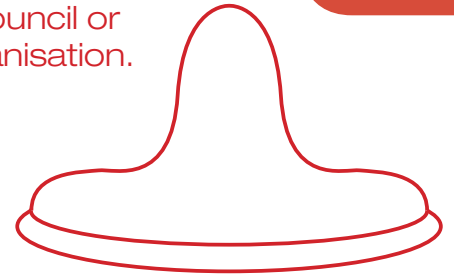
05

You Can Still Have Sex

Use condoms with a
water based lubricant
to avoid passing HIV
and some STIs to your
partners.

For more information
about safe and unsafe
sex, speak with a sexual
health counsellor at your
local AIDS council or
PLWHA organisation.

Sex



06

Exercise

Exercise daily and eat well to stay healthy and **prevent heart problems**. People with HIV can get early heart disease.

Daily walking and a low fat diet will help to protect your heart.



Exercise

07

Stop Smoking

If you smoke, then quitting is **the single most effective way to improve your health**.

Ask your doctor how to quit smoking.



Stop Smoking

08



Recreational Drug Interactions

Party drugs can harm your health. Regular crystal-meth use can damage your brain.

Some drugs interact with HIV treatments, leading to treatments that don't work as well or have worse side effects.

To find out more about HIV and party drugs contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.

Party Drugs

09

Therapeutic Drug Interactions

Tell your doctor what else you are taking.

Prescription drugs, over-the-counter drugs and complementary therapies can all **interact with your HIV treatments.**

For more information about drug interactions contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.



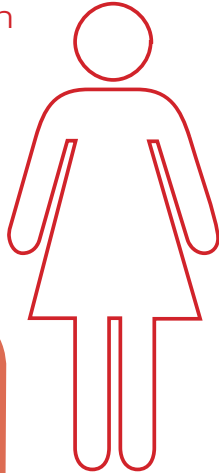
Therapeutic Drugs

10

Pap Smear

Women with HIV should **get a Pap Smear every year.**

For more information about cervical cancer and HIV, contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation. Both can refer you to an appropriate service in your area.



Pap Smear

11

STIs & HIV Transmission

If you have an **STI as well as HIV**, then both the STI and HIV can be **easier to pass on.**

Get regular STI check-ups (blood and urine tests as well as throat and anal swabs).

Many STIs do not have symptoms.



STIs & HIV Transmission

Life Balance

12

Life Balance

HIV brings changes, but **it's a virus, not a lifestyle.**

Don't let HIV overwhelm your life.



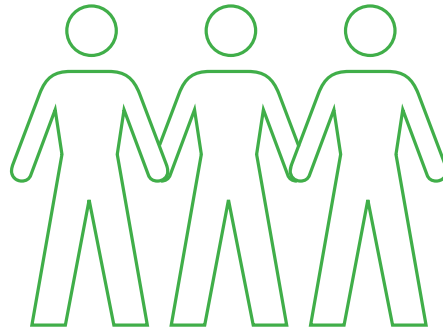
13

Social Support

Support from family, friends and others in the same boat can really help.

Build a support network and stay in touch.

Find out where you can meet other people with HIV through your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.



Support

14

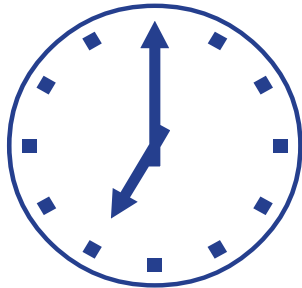
PEP

Accidents can happen.

If you think you may have exposed another person to HIV, find out where they can get PEP treatment to prevent HIV infection taking hold.

PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) must be started within 72 hours of exposure, but **within a few hours is best.**

Call your local AIDS council or your nearest major hospital.



PEP

15

Clinical Trials

New HIV drugs can't become available without **drug trials**, but **you decide** if you want to participate.

To find out more about drug trials and your rights, contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.



Clinical Trials

16

Adherence

Always take your HIV treatments **exactly as prescribed.**

If you don't, there's a risk **your treatments will not work and your HIV will get harder to treat.**

It's better to stop treatments completely than to miss doses, but talk to your doctor first.

There may be a better option.

To find out more about drug resistant HIV and the importance of treatment adherence, contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.



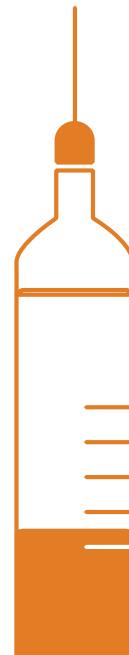
Adherence

17

Vaccinations

Get vaccinated against **Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B and Pneumonia.**

For more information about why HIV positive people should get vaccinated, contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.



Vaccinations

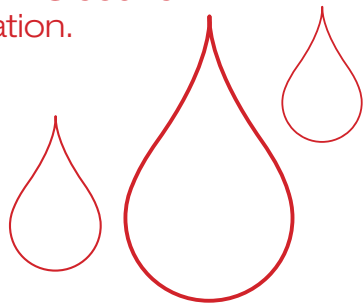
18

Hepatitis C

Hep C is mainly spread through sharing injecting gear, but **people with HIV can get Hep C through sex**, particularly sex that draws blood.

So always use condoms and other safe sex barriers.

For detailed safe sex information, contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.



Hepatitis C

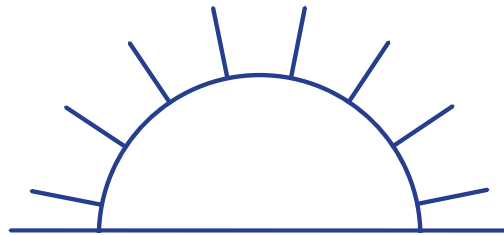
19

New Drugs

Better HIV treatments are coming.

They may be more effective and have less side effects.

To find out more about new drugs in the pipeline, contact your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation.



New Drugs

STI Diagnosis

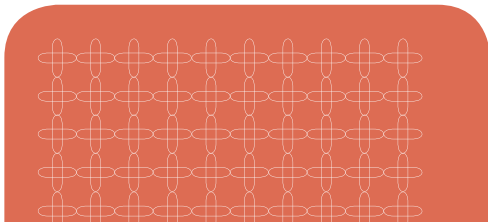
20

STI Diagnosis & Treatment

If you have sex, **ask your doctor for STI tests** (blood and urine tests as well as throat and anal swabs) as part of your regular HIV monitoring.

STI tests don't happen automatically. STIs like syphilis are serious and hard to treat if you have HIV.

Many STIs do not have symptoms.



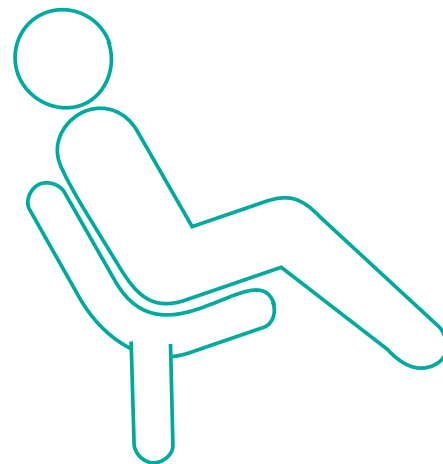
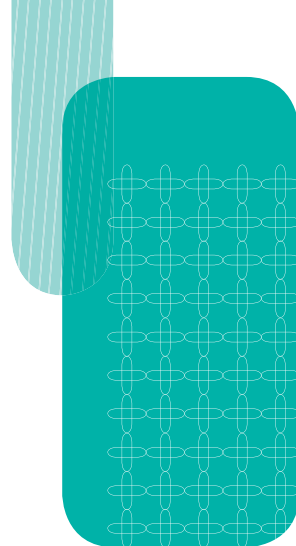
Dentist

21

Dentist

Prevent gum disease.

See your **Dentist every year.**



22

Financial Planning

Plan for your future.

Financial Planning services for people with HIV are available.

Ask your local AIDS council or PLWHA organisation to refer you.



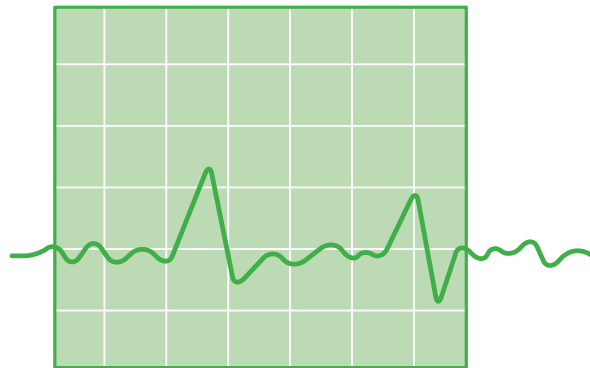
Financial Planning

23

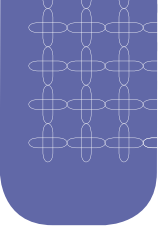
Monitoring

See your doctor every three months to monitor your viral load and CD4 cell count.

To manage HIV well, it is important to keep track of the virus and your body's immune function.



Monitoring



24

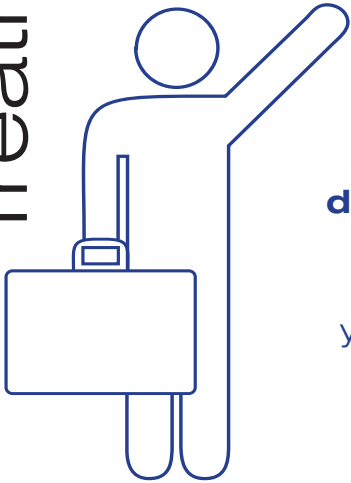
Treatment Breaks

Don't stop or disrupt HIV treatments.

You are more likely to get an opportunistic infection or develop AIDS if you take a treatments break.

Consider changing to different drugs instead.

Talk to your doctor before you do anything.



25

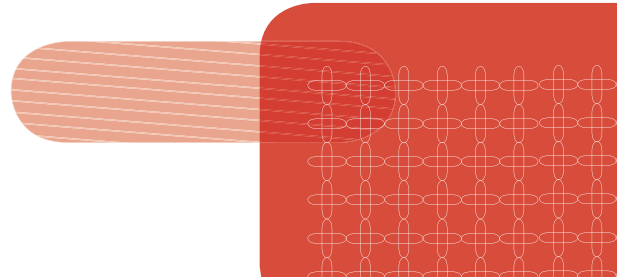
Mental Health

Depression and anxiety are more common among people with HIV.

Often, symptoms are not obvious.

Each time you see your doctor let them know how you're feeling.

AIDS councils and PLWHA organisations can also put you in touch with other appropriate support.



**Australian Federation
of AIDS Organisations**

Level 1, 222 King Street
Newtown NSW 2042, Australia

Mail

PO Box 51
Newtown NSW 2042
Australia

Telephone

+61 2 9557 9399

Facsimile

+61 2 9557 9867

www.afao.org.au



Printed November 2006