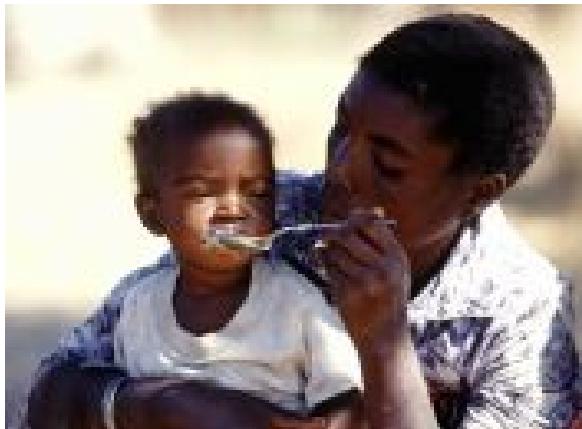


# AIDS AND YOUR FOOD



Good nutrition can make a difference to the well being of a person living with HIV/AIDS and their families. As an extension worker, you have an opportunity to give people good advice about eating well. This leaflet contains information to assist you and to share with staff of health centres and feeding programmes.

## **E**AT A HEALTHY AND BALANCED DIET (ADAPTED TO THE LOCAL DIET)



A person living with HIV/AIDS needs more food to recover from illness. A health diet includes:

- staple foods with every meal (rice, maize, millet, sorghum, potatoes, bread, noodles, tubers);
- legumes every day (peas, lentils, beans);
- fresh vegetables and fruit every day;
- animal and milk products regularly (eggs, milk, cheese, meat);
- fats, oils and sugar regularly; and
- avoid drinking alcohol.

## **R**EGAIN AND MAINTAIN WEIGHT

Loss of weight as a result of AIDS reduces immunity, weakens the body and its ability to do work. It is important to try and increase the:

- amount and variety of foods eaten
- number of meals and snacks
- intake of fats and oils

## **T**REAT COLDS, COUGHS AND FEVERS

- drink plenty of water, herbal teas or other fluids
- breathe in hot vapours (explain how to do this)
- prepare home-made cough syrups (crush a lemon and mix it with honey)
- cool the body with a wet cloth
- take aspirin or paracetamol to reduce pain and fever

## **T**REAT DIARRHOEA

When a person passes a watery stool three or more times a day, they have diarrhoea.

Water and minerals are lost from the body and food can help to prevent and control diarrhoea.

- eat frequently when someone has diarrhoea, do not stop eating
- increase the amounts of fluids (water, soups, juices) usually consumed to replace the water lost
- take an oral rehydration solution (add salt and sugar or powdered cereals to clean and safe water)

An adult normally needs about 1.5 litres or eight cups of fluids per day.

*When a person has diarrhoea the body needs up to three litres a day.*

## BUT IT IS NOT ALWAYS EASY

People who are sick with AIDS may be depressed and not want to eat. Eating can also be painful and some people vomit easily.

Some advice is given below to help in preventing nausea and vomiting and overcome painful eating.



## PREVENT NAUSEA AND VOMITING

- drink plenty of fluids after meals
- sit up when eating
- take lemon juice in hot water or ginger tea to reduce indigestion
- drink small but frequent amounts of water, soups and herbal teas
- avoid or reduce foods that give rise to nausea

## OVERCOME PAINFUL EATING BECAUSE OF A SORE MOUTH OR THROAT

- eat soft, mashed or moist foods such as avocados, squash, pumpkins, papaya, bananas, yoghurt, creamed vegetables, soups and noodles
- add liquid to food
- drink cold drinks, soups and non-acidic fruit juices (e.g. of non acidic fruit juices)
- use a straw or a spout for drinking fluids if necessary
- avoid eating very spicy, salty or sour foods
- avoid foods and drinks that are too hot or too cold

### SEE OTHER LEAFLETS IN THIS SERIES:

- HIV/AIDS in daily life
- Give support to AIDS-affected families: the role of field workers