

BALANCE:  
**LIVING HEALTHY**  
WITH HIV



WELCOME TO

BALANCE:  
**LIVING HEALTHY  
WITH HIV**

Living healthy with HIV can mean doing a combination of things every day to help improve your overall well-being and build on your success.

It's a balance of being active, eating well, and getting support and time to relax. We've gathered these tips to help you do all of those things.

## CONTENTS

**1** Getting And Giving Support.....2

**2** Staying Active.....5

**3** Eating Well.....8

**4** Ways To Unwind.....12





## Support Through Social Media

There's a thriving HIV community online. And they can be a great way to get and give support, if you can't find a group to go to in person.

### THREE REASONS TO BE ONLINE ►

#### 1. CONNECT WITH PEOPLE

Some subjects are tough to discuss in person. But online forums can be a way to discuss your feelings, sex life, or status in a more comfortable setting.

#### 2. YOU CAN BE ANONYMOUS

Not everyone may know your HIV status. But that shouldn't stop you from getting answers to your questions. Social media can give you a way to get answers without giving out your name.

#### 3. CONNECT WITH PEOPLE ANYWHERE

Because the internet is almost everywhere, you can connect with people in a neighboring city or on the other side of the world. Being online lets you connect with people who have the same issues as you, no matter where you live.

## YOU ARE YOUR BEST ADVOCATE

You can be your own advocate when you are living with HIV. Use this exercise to help connect with yourself.



*FINDING THE RIGHT SUPPORT  
MAY HELP YOU DISCOVER A LITTLE  
MORE BALANCE IN YOUR LIFE.*

### Remember to **L.E.A.N.**

#### **LISTEN**

##### **L.E.A.N.**

Take a deep breath, focus, and really hear what the people supporting you are saying. Then think about your own needs and what's important to you.

#### **ACCEPT**

##### **L.E.A.N.**

Making peace with having HIV and needing to take medication daily may help you move forward.

#### **EMPOWER**

##### **L.E.A.N.**

Think about one thing you want to do for yourself each day.

#### **NURTURE**

##### **L.E.A.N.**

There are positive ways to live with HIV. Now's the time to start finding a positive direction and new ways to take care of yourself.





## 2 STAYING ACTIVE



Keeping your body moving can help you maintain your health and build up your immune system—your body’s defense for fighting off illness. Exercises like brisk walking, cycling, or other aerobic activities can raise your heart rate, which is good for your overall health.

It’s recommended that adults typically exercise 30 to 45 minutes per day, 4 or 5 days a week. Tracking your steps or the time you spend exercising can help keep you motivated. Remember to talk to your healthcare provider before starting any new exercise program.



## Get A Move On

If you've already been exercising, ask yourself if it's time to kick it up a notch or two. Or maybe try adding some new things to your routine. If regular exercise hasn't really been your thing, there are a lot of activities that you can ease into. Talk to your healthcare provider to see which ones are right for you.



Spotlight:

### THE BENEFITS OF EXERCISE

Daily physical activity can:

- Help you maintain muscle mass, which some people living with HIV can lose
- Keep your bones stronger, which can help you avoid osteoporosis—weakening of the bones
- Help your brain release chemicals called endorphins that can help improve your mood

## HERE ARE 4 THINGS YOU CAN TRY:



**TAKING YOUR DOG OR A FRIEND'S DOG FOR A WALK**



**IF YOU HAVE A BICYCLE, TAKING IT FOR A SPIN**



**A BRISK WALK THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD OR A NEARBY PARK OR MALL**



**GO OUT DANCING WITH FRIENDS**



section: 2

**A BALANCE OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES  
CAN HELP YOU STAY HEALTHY WHILE  
LIVING WITH HIV.**

**United, We Stand...And Walk, And Bike, Etc.**

For some, finding the motivation to work out regularly can be challenging.

**HERE'S A THOUGHT:  
WORK OUT AS PART OF A GROUP  
OR WITH AN EXERCISE PARTNER.**

Whether you're on a sports team or going for a walk, it's nice to have company.

**The Mind-Body Connection**

A recent study has shown that a combination of cardio and weight training can help improve mood.







# 3 EATING WELL



Eating a balanced diet is an important factor in maintaining good overall health, especially when you have HIV. Because the better your nutrition is, the stronger your immune system can be.



## How To Give Your Immune System An Extra Boost

Anything you can do to keep your immune system healthy is a good thing. So here are a few quick tips to help you shop for healthier food.

### **YOU HAVE THE POWER OF CHOICE:**

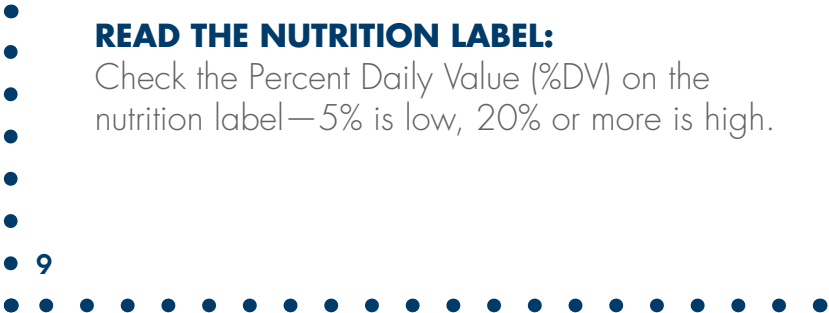
It seems simple, but making healthy decisions at the supermarket is the first step to eating a better, balanced diet.

### **BRING A SHOPPING LIST:**

Now stick to it! If it's not on your list, don't buy it. This will help curb those last-minute impulse purchases.

### **READ THE NUTRITION LABEL:**

Check the Percent Daily Value (%DV) on the nutrition label—5% is low, 20% or more is high.



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**A HEALTHY DIET CAN HELP YOU  
ACHIEVE THE BALANCE YOU  
NEED EVERY DAY.**



**A QUICK  
GUIDE TO  
VITAMINS &  
MINERALS:**  
See page 10 



# VITAMINS AND MINERALS THAT SUPPORT YOUR IMMUNE SYSTEM

## AND WHERE TO GET THEM—FROM A TO Z

People living with HIV can benefit from foods that contain extra vitamins and minerals. In combination with a healthy diet, eating the following foods, which are rich in vitamins and minerals, and are good for your overall health.

### VITAMIN A

for the health of skin, lungs, and stomach

Whole Eggs, Spinach, Carrots, Green Peppers, Sweet Potatoes



### VITAMIN B

good for immune and nervous systems

White Beans, Potatoes, Meat, Fish, Chicken, Nuts



### VITAMIN C

protects against infection and helps in recovery

Oranges, Lemons, Tomatoes, Potatoes



### VITAMIN D

helps keep bones and teeth healthy

Fortified Milk, Fatty Fish, Sunlight



### VITAMIN E

offers protection for the body's cells

Leafy Greens, Avocados, Almonds



### IRON

helps produce red blood cells

Leafy Greens, Whole Grain Breads, Whole Grain Pasta, Beans, Red Meat



### SELENIUM

good for immune system

Whole Grains, Meat, Fish, Chicken, Eggs, Peanut Butter, Nuts



### ZINC

helps with our immune system

Meat, Fish, Poultry, Beans, Peanuts





## Five Food Safety Tips

If you're living with HIV, you might be at a higher risk of getting sick from food that isn't prepared properly, since HIV affects your immune system. So here are a few ways to make clean eating habits part of your daily routine:

- Don't forget to use both soap and water when washing things like knives and cutting boards. It's especially important to wash your hands after handling raw meat
- It's a good idea to wash fruits and vegetables before eating them
- Try not to eat raw seafood, raw eggs, or raw meat
- Have at least two different cutting boards in the kitchen—one for raw meat, the other for fruits and vegetables



### **Water safety is a priority:**

Water can have a lot of different parasites, bacteria, and viruses, so make sure your drinking water is clean.



# 4 WAYS TO UNWIND



When you add the challenges of living with HIV to any other challenges you may face every day, it's easy to feel overwhelmed.

But there are a few things you can do to decompress. Check out the following simple suggestions.



## Three Ways To Unwind And Relax

Here are some things you can do to give yourself the attention you deserve.

### 1. TAKE A FEW DEEP BREATHS

Practice breathing 4 to 6 deep breaths per minute. Repeat up to 10 times. Your body naturally “resets” to a more relaxed and calm state when you practice deep breathing.

### 2. MEDITATE

Find a quiet location and get into a comfortable position. Pay attention to your breathing and keep your mind open to the things around you. Focus on being present in the here and now. Meditating is a helpful way to increase calmness and physical relaxation.

### 3. TAKE A WALK

The best thing about walking is you don’t need a gym membership or expensive equipment. All you need is about 20 minutes a day to get health benefits.

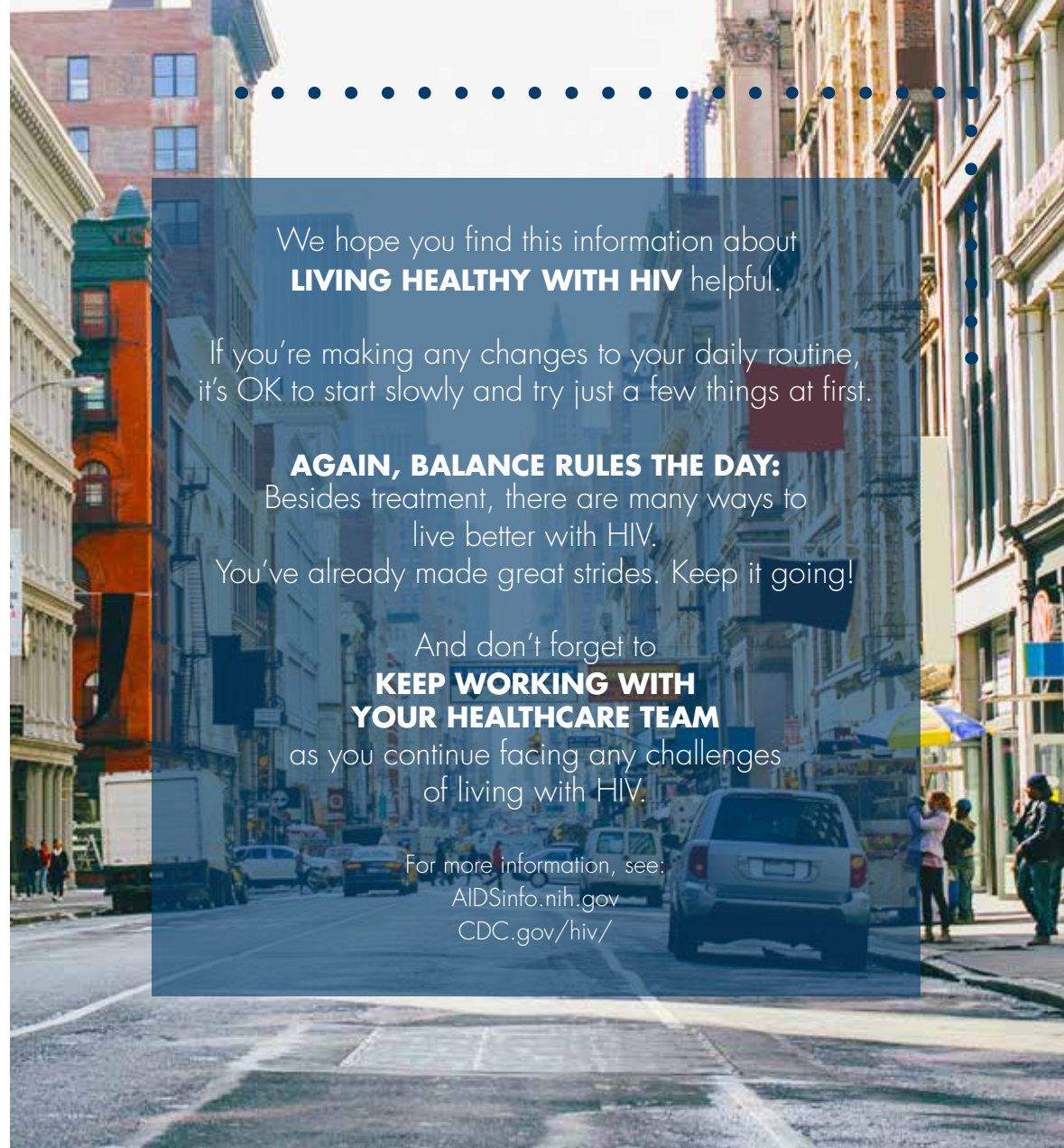
### Remember:

It’s also important to get enough sleep. Most adults need 7 to 8 hours of sleep each night.

To get a better night’s sleep:

- Try to go to bed and wake up at the same time each day
- Sleep in a dark, quiet room
- Don’t drink alcohol, eat a large meal, or exercise before bedtime, and limit caffeine
- Don’t take a nap after 3 p.m.

**REMEMBER, LIFE CAN FEEL MORE  
IN BALANCE WHEN YOU FIND  
WAYS TO TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF.**



We hope you find this information about **LIVING HEALTHY WITH HIV** helpful.

If you're making any changes to your daily routine, it's OK to start slowly and try just a few things at first.

**AGAIN, BALANCE RULES THE DAY:**

Besides treatment, there are many ways to live better with HIV.

You've already made great strides. Keep it going!

And don't forget to

**KEEP WORKING WITH  
YOUR HEALTHCARE TEAM**

as you continue facing any challenges of living with HIV.

For more information, see:  
[AIDSinfo.nih.gov](http://AIDSinfo.nih.gov)  
[CDC.gov/hiv/](http://CDC.gov/hiv/)

