

FOOD AND NUTRITION

Choosing good, nutritious foods and getting adequate calories can help you fight HIV and significantly improve your quality of life.

Good nutrition helps maintain a healthy weight, sustain energy levels and boost the immune system. Poor nutrition weakens your immune function, increasing your risk of infections.

Many HIV medications must be taken with food, while others need to be taken on an empty stomach. Be aware of which requirements your medications have and eat accordingly. The food you eat can play a role in how you manage the side effects of your medication, so be aware of the types of food you should eat before, after or when you take your medication.

What Kinds of Services are Available?

There are many resources to help you obtain food and develop good nutritional habits in Los Angeles County. *These include:*

-Nutritional Counseling: At least twice a year, you should see a dietitian who is knowledgeable about HIV. Many organizations provide one-on-one counseling for those with HIV, either by appointment or at scheduled times during the month

-Food Pantries: Many of these sites in Los Angeles County provide free food to those who qualify

-Food Stamps: If you have a low income, are living with HIV or have another disability, you may be eligible for a monthly allotment

-Home-Delivered Meals: If you are unable to prepare nutritious meals for yourself, many programs may be able to help by delivering meals to your home

How Do I Access Services?

Your case manager can help you access nutrition-related services.

Before accessing services at a food pantry, be prepared to show these documents:

-Proof of California residency (utility bill or lease agreement)

-Picture ID

-Proof of income (your most recent income tax return or pay stub)

-Letter of HIV diagnosis from a licensed physician

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- For the most up-to-date Food and Nutrition listings visit www.hivla.org
- Contact the Los Angeles County Health and Nutrition Hotline at (877) 597-4777
- Call the American Dietetic Association information line, (800) 877-1600 x5000
- Call 2-1-1 LA County Info Line, (800) 339-6993