

## Food: the natural boost for you and your Nelfinavir

### Advice for people who are taking nelfinavir

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### Eating well is important when you are living with HIV:

- Your Doctor has asked you to take your nelfinavir with food, at regular intervals, to help with absorption into your bloodstream.
- Your immune system works best when you eat foods providing a balance of protein, energy, vitamins and minerals.
- Maintaining a healthy weight is vital for your long term well being.

**This leaflet is an introduction to these topics. Talk to a State Registered Dietician for more information.**

### Take Your Nelfinavir Correctly. Take it with Food!

- Studies have shown that nelfinavir is likely to be more effective if taken with food.
- Taking nelfinavir with food helps the body absorb the right amount of drug.
- People are more likely to achieve an undetectable viral load when taking nelfinavir with food, than on an empty stomach.
- Only a light meal or snack needs to be taken with nelfinavir, some ideas are offered later in this leaflet.

#### Taking Your Nelfinavir Doses Twice Daily

- You should take your nelfinavir twice a day, in the morning and evening. Talk to your Doctor, Dietician or Pharmacist to help you decide the best times of day to take your nelfinavir.
- Dosing with food means that you have some flexibility in the way you take your nelfinavir.

#### Difficult Times

- Sometimes following these rules appears more difficult – when you don't feel like eating, or if you are out and about, or travelling, when you need to take your medication.
- If you can't eat when you have to take your nelfinavir, look at the ideas for snacks or drinks that you might be able to take to make sure you eat the minimum quantity of food to ensure the drugs are properly absorbed.
- You should always take 2 doses per day, never less than 8 hours or more than 16 hours apart and always with a light snack.

### Putting it all Together

**Listed below are some food suggestions to eat with nelfinavir. If you can't eat a proper meal when you take your nelfinavir, maximum benefits will be obtained if you have a snack or a drink.**

Each of the following provide the right amount of food for your nelfinavir to be absorbed properly (a maximum of 13g of fat and 350kcal).

#### Breakfast options

- *Large bowl of Crunchy Nut Cornflakes or Porridge with Whole Milk*
- *Two slices Toast with Peanut Butter or Vegetable Margarine and Jam*
- *Croissant and a Banana or Muffin and a Yoghurt*
- *Small Bowl Maize Porridge, 1 slice Toast with Butter, cup of tea with semi-skimmed milk*
- *Small portion Fried Cassava, with a glass of Orange Juice*
- *A Kipper, 1 poached egg, a slice of bread and a black coffee*
- *Two pieces sesame bread and a small plate of feta, tomato and cucumber salad*
- *A Kellogg's breakfast bar and a large coffee latte made with whole milk*
- *1 slice toast with butter, small can baked beans and a fried egg*

## Snack Options

- Small jacket potato with Tuna and Sweetcorn
- Chicken Mayonnaise Salad Sandwich
- 2-egg Spanish Omelette
- A supermarket 'Healthy Eating' sandwich, and a packet of low fat crisps
- Bag of Tortilla chips with Guacomole and Salsa
- Pitta Bread with Hummus and Salad
- 3 Crackers and Cheese, with a glass of Juice
- Can of Nurtiment and a Sesame Bar
- Small Bag of Salted Peanuts and a Glass of Juice
- 1 mandazi (doughnut), a banana and a cup of tea
- Plantain or cassava chips and a glass of orange juice
- 4 finger Kitkat and a glass of apple juice
- Kellogg's cereal bar and a glass of semi-skimmed milk
- Large scone with butter and jam, and a cup of tea
- Cappucino, Toffee Walnut Muffin and a banana
- A half portion of 'Scadishake' or 'Calshake' with a digestive biscuit
- A 'Fortisip' or 'Esnure Plus' with a biscuit
- A packet of crisps and a bottle of Mars milk drink

## Drink options

- Milkshake made with strawberries and Ice-cream
- Mug of Hot Chocolate with a Chocolate Digestive Biscuit

## Lunch of Dinner options

- Small bowl of chicken and Groundnut Stew with Sadza or Nshima
- Bowl of Pepper Soup with Plantain or Yam
- Small portion of African Sunday stew (rice, meat, chicken, and vegetables cooked together)
- Small bowl of Fufu (pounded yam), vegetables with Groundnut sauce, and salad
- Small bowl mataka (Ugandan plantain) with tilapia stew and greens
- 1 piece millet bread with a small serving of lamb and vegetable stew
- Avocado, mozzarella and tomato salad with a wholemeal bread roll
- Smoked Cod on a bed of lentils, with roast potatoes and roast vegetables
- Bowl of chicken soup with two slices bread and butter
- Sausage and tomato sandwich
- Small portion of tarka dahl and sag paneer with 2 chapattis
- Small plate of grilled plantain, roast chicken and vegetables
- Lamb Tagine with couscous
- A supermarket ready-made single portion lasagne
- 2 servings beans on toast with grated cheese
- Small bowl of Pasta with Tomato Sauce and tablespoon of Parmesan

## Get the Balance Right

Be kind to yourself and follow these simple rules:

### Eat regularly

#### Your body will work best if you eat at least three times each day

Skipping meals or going without food for more than about six hours puts a strain on your body. Your body has to begin to rely on stores of energy, protein, vitamins and minerals. Reserves can quickly be used up. Irregular eating can also increase the strain on your liver.

If you just can't manage proper meals every day, then make sure you have healthy snacks instead. If you are feeling a bit under the weather, then nutritious drinks can replace a snack or small meal. Some ideas of snacks are given in this leaflet.

### Think about what you are eating

Each meal should contain a balance of foods providing protein, energy, vitamins and minerals.

### Protein foods:

Meat, Fish, Poultry, Eggs, Dairy Foods such as cheese, milk or yoghurt, nuts and seeds, beans and lentils, soy foods such as tofu and Soya milk, vegetarian meat alternatives such as veggie sausages and veggie burgers.

### **Energy foods:**

Bread, rice, pastas, yam, cassava, cornmeal, sweet potatoes, plantain, breakfast cereals, porridge, buns and cakes, biscuits and crackers, sugary food. Starchy foods such as bread, rice and pasta will give you long-lasting energy. Sugary foods give you bursts of energy that will be used up quickly.

### **Fruits and Vegetables:**

Fruits and vegetables provide many vitamins and minerals essential to help the immune system fight infection.

Try to have at least five portions of fruit and/or vegetables each day. This may sound a lot; five portions could include a glass of orange juice and half a can of baked beans at breakfast, a banana blended into a milkshake at lunch, canned sweetcorn with dinner and a satsuma later in the evening. Colourful fruits and vegetables tend to have more vitamins and minerals than less colourful ones!

### **Variety is the spice of life**

You are less likely to miss out on vital nutrients if you eat a variety of foods. Try having different things for breakfast. Don't always have a sandwich at lunchtime. Nuts and dried fruit make a good change to crisps and biscuits.

Talk to your doctor or dietitian if you are worried that you might be missing out on vitamins and minerals.

**Make sure you get professional advice before taking any supplements, as taking high doses of some vitamins and minerals can be harmful.**

### **Fluid**

Drink plenty of fluid. Drinks such as tea, coffee and cola contain caffeine which can act as a diuretic and encourage your kidneys to flush out more fluid than you are drinking, and so worsen dehydration. Drinks can provide plenty of nutrition – useful if you don't like eating solid food.

## **Weights and Measures**

When you are living with HIV it is important to pay some attention to your weight. Think about what makes up your overall body weight.

- Bones
- Organs, like your heart, intestines and brain
- Muscle tissue
- Fat
- Water

Scientists have shown that people living with HIV who keep healthy levels of muscle tissue have better long-term health. This does not mean that you have to spend hours in the gym building muscles!

A sensible balance of exercise and eating can make sure you have a healthy amount of tissue in your body:

- Try to achieve a good overall weight for your height and build. A dietitian can advise you on this.
- Exercise at least three times each week. Resistance exercise (e.g. pushing against weights or walking up stairs) helps build muscle tissue whereas aerobic exercise (e.g. running or dancing) helps lose weight
- Eat within two hours of finishing your exercise. A balance of protein and starchy foods will help your body build muscle.
- Make sure you drink plenty of liquid when exercising.

**Make sure you get professional advice if you are thinking of taking any supplements claimed to help build muscle.**

Being overweight can be a problem for some people living with HIV. If you are thinking about dieting to lose weight, do this with the support of a state registered dietitian. It is vital that you lose as little muscle tissue as possible, losing fat from your body is fine! A dietitian can monitor this for you.

## **Hearts and Bones**

Antiretroviral medicines help people with HIV live longer. As we grow older we increase our risk of heart disease and brittle bones (osteoporosis). Fortunately making a few simple food choices NOW can reduce this increasing risk:

### **Fats**

Too much 'saturated' fat can lead to heart disease. Fats from animals tend to be saturated – the fat on meat or in chicken skin, or the fat in butter, milk and cheese, for example. Try eating leaner meat, avoid chicken skin, and choose lower fat dairy foods.

'Polyunsaturated' and 'Monounsaturated' fats are those fats that come from plants – olive oil, vegetable margarine and the fats found in avocados and nuts. These oils and fats are less likely to lead to heart disease than animal fats.

### **Fish**

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Fish contains a type of fat called omega –3. Eating fish with coloured flesh, (e.g. salmon) three times each week will provide enough of the omega-3 oils to protect against heart disease.

### **Fruits and Vegetables**

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The vitamins found in fruits and vegetables protect us against heart disease.

### **Foods rich in Calcium and Vitamin D**

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Calcium and Vitamin D are important to prevent brittle bones. Dairy foods such as milk and cheese are rich in calcium. Lower fat dairy foods have the same amount of calcium. Dark green vegetables such as spinach, beans and lentils, nuts and seeds can also provide calcium.

Our bodies make Vitamin D when the sun shines on our skin. If you don't get enough sun, Vitamin D is also found in fish, margarine and eggs.

### **Regular exercise**

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This is also important to help protect against heart disease and brittle bones.

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