

FOOD & NUTRITION

Choosing healthy foods and getting enough calories can help you fight HIV and improve the quality of your life.

Good nutrition helps you maintain weight and lean body mass, keep energy levels up and boost your immune function. Poor nutrition weakens your immune system and increases your risk for other infections.

Some HIV medications must be taken with food, while others must be taken on an empty stomach. Food can also help you manage side effects caused by your medication.

What Kind of Services are Available?

In Los Angeles County, there are many resources available to help you obtain food and develop good eating habits.

Food and nutrition resources in Los Angeles County include:

- > **Nutritional counseling:** See a dietitian who knows about HIV nutrition at least twice each year. Many organizations provide one-on-one counseling for persons with HIV by appointment or at scheduled times during the month.
- > **Food pantries:** Many sites throughout Los Angeles County provide free food to eligible clients.
- > **Food stamps:** Persons with low income and who are living with HIV or another disability may be eligible to receive a monthly allotment to purchase food.
- > **Home-delivered meals.** If you are unable to prepare healthy meals for yourself, you may be eligible to have meals delivered to you.

How to Get Services

To get food and nutrition services, talk with your case manager.

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

- > Proof of California residence (utility bill or lease agreement)
- > Picture identification
- > Proof of income (your most recent income tax return or pay stub)
- > Letter of HIV diagnosis from a licensed physician

Visit www.hivla.org for the most up-to-date Food and Nutrition listings.

If food and nutrition services are not delivered appropriately, please contact OAPP's warmline @ (800) 260-8787.