

HANDOUT 4.3. JOB AID 2: THE IMPORTANCE OF GOOD NUTRITION

On the first visit, inform clients of the importance of good nutrition. This can motivate them to pay attention to their nutrition and follow your nutrition recommendations.

1. Explain to the client that HIV can cause or worsen malnutrition.

- HIV increases energy needs, so a person with HIV has to eat more food to get this energy.
- HIV increases the risk of opportunistic infections, which reduce the body's ability to absorb nutrients and can cause or worsen nutrient deficiencies.
- Symptoms of opportunistic infections such as fever, loss of appetite, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea and mouth sores (thrush) can reduce food intake or access to food
- Some side effects of medicines such as ARVs may cause loss of appetite or affect the body's absorption of nutrients.

2. Explain to the client that poor nutrition can worsen the effects of HIV by:

- Weakening the immune system
- Increasing susceptibility to infections
- Slowing recovery from infections

3. Counsel the client on the importance of good nutrition.

- Good nutrition helps the body grow, develop and repair itself.
- Good nutrition helps you feel stronger and look better.
- Good nutrition helps strengthen the immune system regardless of HIV status.
- Good nutrition may help slow the progression of HIV to AIDS.
- Good nutrition allows you to remain productive, makes you physically stronger and enables you to do more physical activity such as household chores.
- Good nutrition can help prevent weight loss.
- Good nutrition helps the body utilize some medicines.