If You Knew Sushi

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With AIDS and liver disease from hepatitis B, I've been given only a few weeks to live—for the past two years. So I've developed quite a dark sense of humor, a jaundiced eye for the long list of don'ts that come with HIV—and rediscovered my love for sushi in the process. Raw fish is a serious no-no for HIVers because of the food-poisoning risk (bacteria are killed by cooking but hang on in raw fishy flesh), which can do serious harm to the immune-suppressed. In my case it would surely be fatal. But so is not eating, and on bad days, sushi's smooth, cool protein is the only thing other than Ensure that I can get down—and digest. To be as safe as I can (while throwing so much caution to so many winds), I don't get sushi delivered (it would warm up en route), and I eat it only at restaurants I trust—never from the prepackaged boxes in supermarkets and delis. That's my risky fish story.

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