Aging With HIV Cheat Sheet

Follow these tips for living better and longer.

September 8, 2025 By Tim Murphy

Research consistently shows that you'll likely live better and longer if you are:

- CONNECTED TO OTHERS. Some research has shown that having even just one meaningful conversation a day can improve well-being. If you're alone and in your own head too much, plug into HIV networks, including The Reunion Project, NMAC's 50+ Strong and Healthy, the S. People Living with HIV Caucus or Positive Women's Network. But you don't just have to connect with other HIV-positive folks. Call your local health department or Google "social groups" or "senior/older" and include your ZIP code to see what's available near you.

- TALK ABOUT GOOD AGING WITH YOUR HEALTH PROVIDER. The next time you're face-to-face with them, say, "I want to age as well as I can with HIV. Can we talk through a plan?" They'll likely discuss whether you could benefit from medications to control conditions like high cholesterol, blood pressure and depression—unless you're already on them. They'll also likely ask how much you drink or smoke, whether you'd like help cutting down or stopping, how you eat, whether you exercise and whether you have other people and mental stimulation in your life. (Don't knock those bingo nights—they're fun!) Be honest with them. That's the first step toward making positive change.

- TAKE BABY STEPS. Nobody can be expected to undergo a lifestyle and wellness overhaul in the snap of a finger. Think of it this way: If you're not eating enough fruit and vegetables, buy frozen versions that you can slip into smoothies, soups, pastas and more. They're just as nutritious and often cheaper, and they keep forever. If you barely get off the couch all day, commit to walking up and down your street 15 minutes daily for a week, and then ramp it up

from there.

- BREAK YOUR WALL OF SILENCE. Sometimes we become so depressed that we cut everyone off and fall into a rut. If that's you, find the energy and the courage to make that first call—to a loved one, a health provider or anyone you trust—and simply say, "I'm not feeling great, and I need help." Then truly be open to it. You'll be surprised where folks can lead you once they know you're in need.

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