Finding Support

Dealing with HIV can be a challenge, but you don’t have to face it alone. Below are five different types of support networks you can plug into for a healthy and happy life.

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Health Care Team

Doctors, nurses and health care providers make up the front-line defense when it comes to understanding the medicines and lab tests associated with your HIV. Another excellent source of medical know-how is your local pharmacist. And therapists can help you deal with any mental health issues. Visit the POZ Directory to find your local HIV/AIDS health care and service organizations.

Case Managers/Social Workers

For help filling out insurance paperwork or finding a program to help pay your rent, don’t hesitate to ask these experts. They can help you wade through tedious tasks so you can focus on what’s important: your health.

Family, Friends & Community

A POZ Survey found that 56 percent of respondents relied on friends for support, and 41 percent counted on family members. Church communities, coworkers and social groups may also offer you a way to connect with like-minded people.

Support Groups

There are groups for both long-term HIV survivors and for the newly diagnosed that cater to women, alcoholics, gay men and others. These can help you feel less lonely and isolated and serve as good sources of information.

Online Forums

If you can’t disclose your status to family and friends or if you don’t feel comfortable in a support group (or can’t get to one), visit the flourishing online HIV community, where you can ask questions, strike up conversations or just listen in. Visit forums.poz.com to connect with others

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