

# POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Health and Wellness Information for Members

Winter 2021



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## Spread Love, Not COVID-19 this Holiday Season



This holiday season we want all of our members to enjoy special times. We also want to make sure that you are still staying safe and protecting yourself from COVID-19. This year think how your holiday plans can be changed to reduce the spread. This will keep you, your friends, families, and communities healthy and safe.

### Stay Safe While Doing Indoor and Outdoor Activities with Others

- If you haven't been vaccinated yet, do it now. Encourage your family and friends to get vaccinated.
- If you are not fully vaccinated and aged 2 or older, you should wear a mask in indoor public places.
- People who have a condition or are taking medications that weaken their immune system may not be fully protected even if they are fully vaccinated. They should continue wearing a well-fitted mask, until advised otherwise by their healthcare provider.
- If you are fully vaccinated, still wear a mask indoors in public if you are in a high spread area.
- Keep it to Small Gatherings of Family and Friends
- Have a virtual party! Safely gather on-line instead of in-person
- Disinfect commonly touched surfaces and any shared items between use. Wash your hands often.
- Get tested: encourage guests to take COVID-19 test before event. Especially if they may have been exposed.

If you develop symptoms consistent with COVID-19 within 14 days of the event or celebration, such as fever, cough, or shortness of breath. If you test positive for COVID-19, immediately notify the host and others who attended. They may need to inform other attendees about their possible exposure to the virus. Contact your healthcare provider and follow the CDC-recommended steps for what to do if you become sick. Follow the public health recommendations for community-related exposure.



P.O. Box 46160, Los Angeles, CA 90046  
Visit us 24/7 on the web  
[www.php-ga.org](http://www.php-ga.org)  
Member Services  
Mon - Fri, 8:00 am to 8:00 pm  
(833) 267-6768  
TTY: 711

## Medical Staff Professionals

If you're wondering what a medical staff professional (MSP) does, some would say that they are a key individual who makes things happen behind the scenes.

Not only are MSPs responsible for credentialing and privileging medical staff members. They also manage and take minutes at meetings, stay up-to-date on accreditation standards and state and federal regulations. MSPs maintain medical staff rosters and financial accounts, and play the roles of teacher, counselor, and mediator. They are also keepers of the medical staff bylaws, rules, regulations, and policies.

Awareness week first became nationally recognized in 1992 when President George Bush signed a congressional joint resolution at the urging of The National Association Medical Staff Services (NAMSS). We thank them for all that they do for the plan and plan members.

***National Medical Staff Services Awareness Week is November 1-7 every year.***



## Prevention Points

At AIDS Healthcare Foundation, preventive care has always been an essential part of your health plan. Preventive services include immunizations and screenings to detect possible diseases and help you stay well. Prevention is about staying healthy and preventing or delaying disease. **Some key preventative screenings include:**

- ✓ Blood pressure screening for all adults
- ✓ Cholesterol screening
- ✓ Colorectal cancer screening for adults over 45
- ✓ Type 2 diabetes screening for adults with high blood pressure
- ✓ Mammograms every one to two years for women over 40
- ✓ Cervical cancer screening for sexually active women
- ✓ Osteoporosis screening for women over 60, depending on risk factors
- ✓ Immunizations for children from birth to 18 years
- ✓ Obesity screening and counseling for children



## Healthy Holiday Nutrition

Good nutrition supports overall health and helps maintain the immune system. It also helps people living with HIV/AIDS maintain a healthy weight and absorb HIV medicines. Following a healthy diet also provides you with additional benefits such as:

- Provides the energy and nutrients your body needs to fight infections
- Manage HIV symptoms and complications
- Reduces the risk for stroke, other cardiovascular diseases, and type-2 diabetes

### What's included in a healthy diet?

- Eat fruits and vegetables. They can be fresh, frozen or canned. Eat more dark green vegetables such as leafy greens or broccoli, and orange vegetables such as carrots and sweet potatoes.
- Vary protein choices with more fish, beans and peas.
- Eat at least three ounces of whole-grain cereals, bread, crackers, rice or pasta every day.
- Have three servings of low-fat or fat-free dairy (milk, yogurt or cheese) that are fortified with vitamin D to help keep your bones healthy.
- Make the fats you eat healthy (polyunsaturated and monounsaturated fats). Switch from solid fats to oils when preparing food.

## Healthy Apple Pie Holiday Recipe

### Number of servings

Serves 8 \*Low Sodium \*Healthy carb

### Ingredients

#### Pie crust

- 1 cup dry rolled oats
- 1/4 cup whole-wheat pastry flour
- 1/4 cup ground almonds
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar, packed
- 3 tablespoons canola oil
- 1 tablespoon water

#### Filling

- 6 cups sliced and peeled tart apples (about 4 large apples)
- 1/3 cup frozen apple juice concentrate
- 2 tablespoons quick-cooking tapioca
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon

### Directions

To prepare pie crust, mix dry ingredients together in a large mixing bowl. In a separate bowl, mix oil and water with a whisk. Add oil and water mixture to dry ingredients. Mix until dough holds together. Add a bit more water if needed. Press dough into a 9-inch pie plate. Set aside until filling is prepared.

To prepare the filling, combine all ingredients in a large bowl. Let stand for 15 minutes. Stir and then spoon into prepared pie crust.

Bake at 425 F for 15 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 F and bake 40 minutes, or until apples are tender.



### Nutritional analysis per serving

Serving size: 1 slice

- Calories 204
- Total fat 8 g
- Saturated fat 0.5 g
- Trans fat
- Monounsaturated fat 5 g
- Cholesterol 0 mg
- Sodium 2 mg
- Total carbohydrate 29 g
- Dietary fiber 4 g
- Added sugars 3 g
- Protein 4 g



## A Message from Our Director of Pharmacy:

PHP wants to help you stay healthy. Vaccines play an important role in keeping people healthy. They protect you against serious and sometimes deadly diseases.

Vaccines are especially important for people with chronic health conditions like HIV. It may be harder to fight off vaccine-preventable diseases. HIV can also make it more likely that you'll have serious complications from those diseases. This is why getting the recommended vaccines is an important part of your overall HIV medical care.

Vaccines are very effective and they don't just protect individuals from disease. They also protect communities. When most people in a community get immunized against a disease, there is little chance of a disease outbreak. Eventually, the disease becomes rare—and sometimes, it's wiped out altogether.

The following vaccines are recommended for people with HIV:

- COVID-19
- Hepatitis B
- HPV (for those up to age 26)
- Influenza (Flu)
- Meningococcal series which protects against meningococcal disease
- Pneumococcal (Pneumonia)
- Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Whooping cough).

A single vaccine protects against the three diseases. Every 10 years, a repeat vaccine against tetanus and diphtheria (called Td) is also recommended

Based on age or other circumstances, your provider may recommend other vaccinations as well.

## Questions and Answers from Our Director of Pharmacy:

### Are All Types of Vaccines Safe for People Living with HIV?

Vaccines are generally safe for people with HIV. However, some vaccines may not be recommended. For example, live attenuated vaccines (LAV)—like the chickenpox vaccine—contain a weakened but live form of the germ that causes the disease. LAVs can potentially cause an infection for people with HIV. However, depending on age, health, previous vaccinations, or other factors, some LAVs may be recommended. Talk to your health care provider about what is recommended for you.

### Can HIV Affect How Well a Vaccine Works?

Yes. HIV can weaken your body's immune response to a vaccine, making the vaccine less effective. In general, vaccines work best when your CD4 count is above 200 copies/mm<sup>3</sup>.

Also, by stimulating your immune system, vaccines may cause your HIV viral load to increase temporarily.

### Do Vaccines Cause Side Effects?

Any vaccine can cause side effects. Side effects from vaccines are generally minor (for example, soreness at the location of an injection or a low-grade fever) and go away within a few days.

Severe reactions to vaccines are rare. Before getting a vaccine, talk to your health care provider about the benefits and risks of the vaccine and possible side effects.

### Is the Flu Vaccines Good for People with HIV?

Yes. The Flu vaccine is the best way to protect you and your loved ones against the flu. People with HIV should receive the flu shot rather than the nasal spray. The shot does not contain live flu virus whereas the nasal spray contains flu virus that is alive but weakened. People with weakened immune systems may have a higher risk of complications from the nasal spray.

### Are the COVID-19 Vaccines Good for People with HIV?

Yes. CDC/HHS recommends that people with HIV get COVID-19 vaccines, regardless of their CD4 or viral load, because the potential benefits outweigh the potential risks.

If you have advanced or untreated HIV, CDC recommends that you receive an additional dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 28 days after your second dose of Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna.

In addition, COVID-19 vaccine booster shots are available for Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine recipients who completed their initial series at least 6 months ago and are: age 65 and older; age 18+ who live in long-term care settings; age 18+ who have underlying medical conditions (including HIV); age 18+ who work in high-risk settings; and age 18+ who live in high-risk settings.

Talk to your health care provider about whether a booster shot is right for you.

### Wishing you a happy, healthy and vaccinated holiday season!

Sincerely,

Your PHP Georgia Pharmacy Director



## AIDS @ 40 Years

December 1 is World AIDS Day. This year marks 40 years since the first official cases of AIDS were found. On June 5, 1981, a new disease was reported amongst 5 gay men in Los Angeles, CA. Research showed that this disease was passed through blood, sex and childbirth.

On this 40th anniversary, we remember the more than 32 million people who have died from HIV worldwide since the start of the global epidemic. There are also over 38 million people currently living with HIV, including 1.2 million here in the U.S

Today, people with HIV who know their status take HIV meds and can live long healthy lives and have low risks of transmitting HIV to others. Progress has been made to HIV tests, HIV treatments, prevention strategies, and improved care for persons with HIV.

AHF started in 1987 as a response to the people living and dying from HIV/AIDS. AHF has cared for MILLIONS of people living with HIV and AIDS worldwide. AHF funds its mission to rid the world of AIDS through a network of pharmacies, thrift stores, healthcare contracts and other strategic partnerships. Generating new, innovative ways of treatment, prevention and advocacy has been the hallmark of our success.

PHP/PHC has provided people living with HIV quality health care since 1995. It was the nation's first Medicaid health plan for HIV-positive people living in Los Angeles. Today, PHP/PHC cares for more than 4,200 lives in California, Florida and Georgia.

Over the past 40 years there has been many losses and progress around AIDS. On this World AIDS Day 2021, we remember all those who have lost their fight with AIDS and we are thankful for all those who continue to fight for the rights and health against HIV & AIDS.



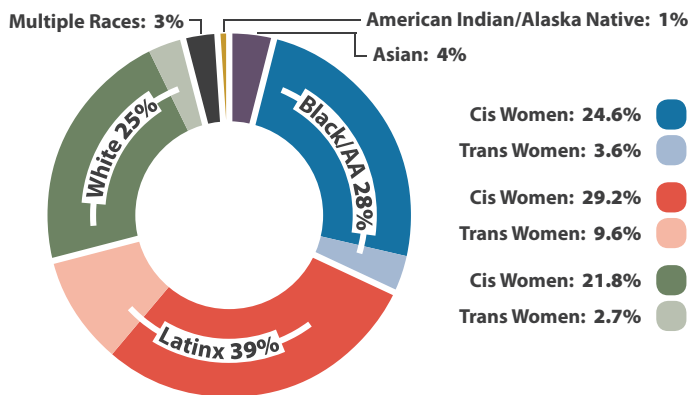
## HIV and Women

- According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), in 2018, 19% of the new HIV diagnoses in the United States and dependent areas were among women.
- The most common way that women get HIV is through sex with a male partner who has HIV.
- Several factors can increase the risk of HIV in women. For example, during vaginal or anal sex, a woman has a greater risk for getting HIV.
- Black/African American women continue to be disproportionately affected by HIV.
- Women with HIV take HIV medicines during pregnancy and childbirth to prevent perinatal transmission of HIV and to protect their own health.

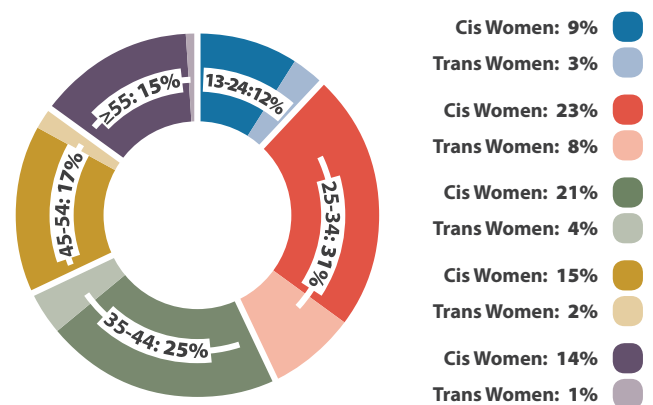


**ONE in seven new HIV diagnoses are among WOMEN**

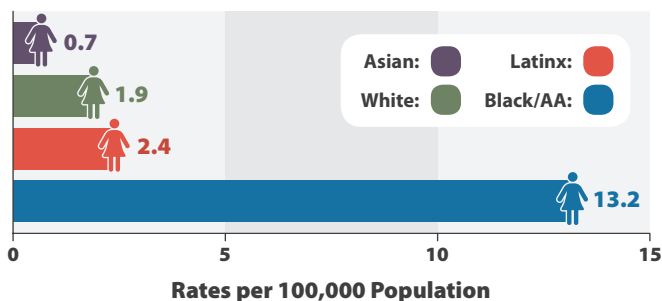
### Black/African American & Latinx Women are Disproportionately Affected by HIV



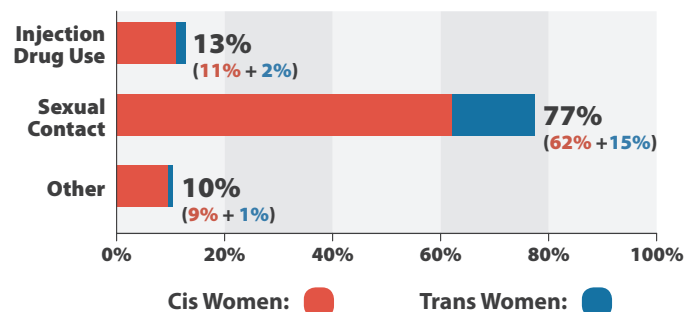
### Women Aged 25 to 34 had the Largest Proportion of New Diagnoses



### Black/African American Cisgender Women Have the Highest Rate of New HIV Diagnoses



### Most New HIV Diagnoses Among Women are Attributed to Sexual Contact



# A Pandemic's Effect on Mental Health

**Pandemic – a disease prevalent over a whole country or the world.**

HIV/AIDS is a pandemic that hit the world in the 1980s. As of 2018, approximately 37.9 million people are infected with HIV globally. There were about 770,000 deaths from AIDS in 2018.

COVID-19 is a pandemic also known as the coronavirus pandemic. This is an ongoing pandemic that was first identified in December 2019. As of December 1, 2020, more than 63.5 million cases have been confirmed, with more than 1.47 million deaths attributed to COVID-19.

Pandemics can be stressful for people. Fear and anxiety about a new disease and what could happen can be overwhelming. It can cause strong emotions in adults and children. Public health actions like social distancing can make people feel isolated and lonely and can increase stress and anxiety. However, these actions are necessary to reduce the spread of disease. Healthily coping with stress will make you, the people you care about, and your community stronger.

## 4 most common mental health topics during a pandemic

Anxiety

Depression

Post-traumatic stress

Substance Use



## HIV/AIDS & COVID-19 Impact

- **Trouble getting needed services** - similar to HIV, COVID patients need care such as medicines, vaccines, housing, and food. Both of these can affect people of color and lower income more than others.
- **Loss of social support** - the key factor for COVID prevention is social distancing. This can result in feeling isolated. Those who are living with HIV may also experience this.
- **Having to tell others about health status** - this is tied closely to stigma. Having to tell others about their COVID and HIV status may be hard due to the fear of discrimination. Many positive people feel emotionally rejected by family and peers.
- **Managing your medications** - for people living with HIV, there are several meds needed to keep them healthy. Many have issues with access and the costs of these meds. There are currently no meds for COVID-19, however, the updates in the availability of the vaccine may cause anxiety.
- **Going through changes in your physical appearance or abilities** - both viruses have symptoms that may cause people to feel fatigued, weak, tired, loss of smell and taste, and can have changes in their previous physical status.
- **Dealing with loss** - this includes the loss of relationships and/or even death due to the viruses. People have fears of death from these viruses such as "will I be next or will someone I know be next?". Many who lived through the 1980s/1990s connected to HIV/AIDS, recall going through waves of seeing people they loved die. COVID may also present those same fears of helplessness and helplessness surrounding death.

*"Despite the differences in how the viruses are spread, HIV and COVID-19 have in common fear and anxiety related to transmission" ~ author not noted*

If you are dealing with any mental health issues we can help. Your mental health benefits are now provided by Magellan Health. To find a mental health provider near you, visit [www.positivehealthcare.net/provider-find](http://www.positivehealthcare.net/provider-find)

**You can also see the newsletter online @:**

PHP Georgia: [www.php-ga.org/for-members/newsletters/](http://www.php-ga.org/for-members/newsletters/)



## *A Message from Your Health Plan*

### **Your Contact Information**

PHP cares about you and your health. We need to know if you moved or got a new phone number. Please call Member Services to update your record any time you make a change.

### **Member Services**

Monday-Friday 8:00 am-8:00 pm • Georgia: (833) 267-6768

### **Medication Therapy Management Program (MTMP)**

As part of PHP, you are enrolled in the MTMP. This Program helps people who take many prescribed meds. The Program lowers the chance of mistakes and reactions with your meds.

Your health care team will be in touch with you and your doctor. They will explain the drugs that you take. Your doctor will know of safety issues with your meds. Any other health issues will also be handled. Your RN Care Manager will contact you to make an action plan for your meds. An action plan with your nurse care manager will help with any problems you may have. The action plan will let you know just how and when to take your meds.

### **Drug Safety**

Certain meds can be risky for older people. Find a list of high-risk meds and safe treatment options on our website under Prescription Medications.

PHP GA: [www.php-ga.org/for-members/education](http://www.php-ga.org/for-members/education)

### **Compliance Hotline**

Help us look out for Medicare fraud and abuse. For example, if your Explanation of Benefits lists charges that are wrong, call Member Services. Call our Compliance Hotline if you suspect possible fraud or abuse.

**Compliance Hotline:** (800) AIDS-HIV • (800) 243-7448

## **Special Needs**

We know many of our members have special needs that make it hard to communicate with their healthcare team or Health Plan. Tell the doctor, nurse care manager or other member of your health home team if English is the not language you speak. We can call an interpreter who speaks your language. If you are deaf, hard-of-hearing or have other special needs, we can arrange a service to help us communicate with you. For your health, it is vital that you and your doctor or healthcare team understand each other. This service is free to you.



**ATTENTION:** This information is available for free in other languages. Please contact our customer service number at (800) 263-0067, 8:00 am -8:00 pm, seven days a week. (TTY: 711)

**ATENCIÓN:** Si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-263-0067, 8:00 am -8:00 pm, los siete días de la semana. (TTY: 711)

## *Questions?*

### **Contact Your RN Care Manager**

Mon-Fri, 8:30am-5:30pm • (833) 267-6768

### **Urgent After-Hours Nurse Advice Line**

Mon-Fri, 5:30 pm-8:30 am and 24 hours on Weekends. Available 365 days a year. (800) 797-1717

### **24 Hour Pharmacy Customer Service**

(833) 267-6769

