



Aging Positively with HIV

www.thewellproject.org

Women, Aging, and HIV

Aging can bring challenges for many women. Doing so as a woman living with HIV can add to that complexity.

We can strive to age with intention by consistently choosing to be positive about aging and life with HIV.

We can remember the upsides to aging, such as:

INCREASED CONFIDENCE

LIVED EXPERIENCE

GREATER SENSE OF SELF-WORTH

WISDOM

PATIENCE



These attributes can ease the path to aging with grace and growth.

How do I age positively?

- **Find folks you connect with.** Connection reduces isolation and increases our sense of safety. Community can build in person or online and can include anyone: family, friends, other women living with HIV – even pets!
- **Build a wellness habitat.** Surround yourself with things you love (like art or music), engage in hobbies, pamper yourself, volunteer, and address your mental and spiritual health needs.
- **Try therapy.** While it may not be for everyone, therapy can contribute to your overall outlook and offer tools to navigate hard times.
- **Explore complementary health therapies.** Yoga, meditation, mindfulness, acupuncture, and other practices can boost mental health.



What does vibrant aging look like?

How can you inhabit your body in a way that feels good?

- Explore **body positivity** and **self-love**
- Engage in **physical activity** in a way that is comfortable and appropriate for you. Low-impact activities like walking, weightlifting, and swimming have health benefits for the body, brain, and bones!
- **Pleasurable sex** doesn't have to stop because of HIV or aging! Sexual pleasure is good for you emotionally and physically and can lead to lower stress, better sleep, increased levels of oxytocin (the "love hormone") ... **and more!**



What about healthy aging for women living with HIV?

While health challenges will emerge as we age, preparing early can make a huge difference! Bone, breast/chest, and heart health are a few key considerations for women aging with HIV. Learn more about the screenings we need as we age with HIV here:

bit.ly/WomenHIVHealthTests

Menopause will eventually affect all cis women (women who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth) and others with a uterus. Learn how you can prepare to discuss menopause and its side effects with your provider by visiting:

bit.ly/MenopauseHIV

Strong relationships with your providers are also key to aging well. Shared decision-making, self-advocacy, and following your plan of care all lead to healthier outcomes.

How can I plan for aging?

Creating an "aging plan" sooner rather than later allows you to make better decisions about where and how you wish to age.

Your plan may include:

- Care planning
 - Who?
 - Where? (home or facility)
 - How much?
- Long-term care insurance
- Legal documents (e.g., will, power of attorney for health, finances, etc.)
- Financial planning and check-ups
- Building a safe home environment
 - Knowing when to involve adult protective services
 - Mobility safety awareness (trip hazards, lighting, reconsidering use of rugs)

Having a plan in place (and discussing with family and friends in advance) can make the process much less stressful.

SCAN QR CODE to access resources around women aging with HIV including fact sheets, blogs, and much more!



SCAN QR CODE to join our private Facebook group for women aging with HIV!



Visit The Well Project

to access evidence-based fact sheets and other educational programming; community support; advocacy and leadership development; collaborative engagement; and women-focused research!

Join our dynamic community of women living with and vulnerable to HIV at:
www.thewellproject.org

