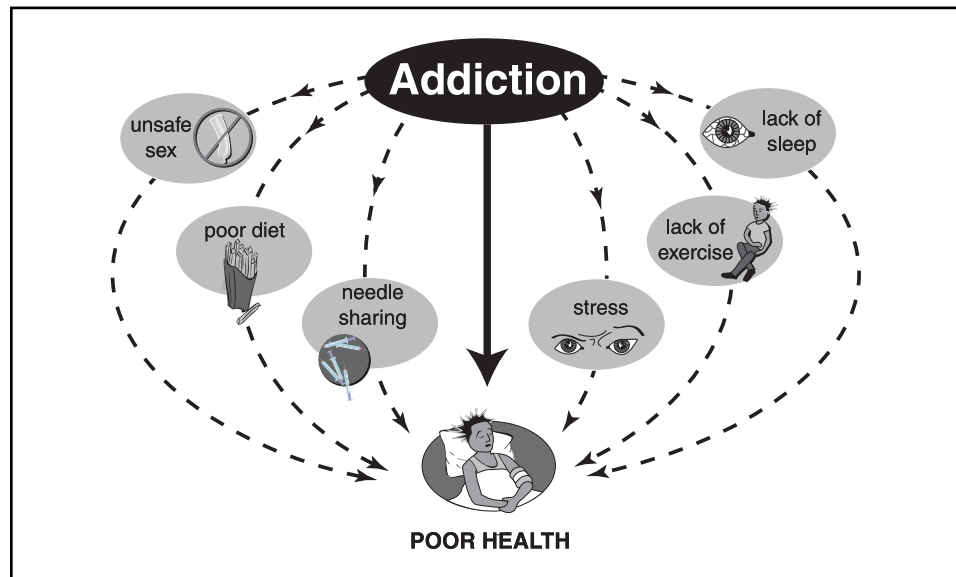


# HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES

## Skills to Be Learned

- Coping Skills
- Stress Management
- Nutritional Guidelines and Food Hygiene

In this chapter we will be discussing ways to maintain and improve your health by making healthy lifestyle choices. A theme that will be repeated throughout HHRP<sup>+</sup> is that if you are well-prepared, you can gain control over many aspects of your health and your life. Some people who test positive for HIV mistakenly believe that there is nothing they can do and simply give up. The fact is that there are many things you can do to maintain and improve your health. In this chapter we will focus on making lifestyle changes. The most obvious lifestyle change you can make that will help you maintain or improve your health is of course being abstinent from drugs. Your decision to enter addiction treatment and to be drug-free is an **essential** first step in your decision to maintain and improve your health. However, it is not the only step you need to take.



Addiction has both direct and indirect effects on your health. Addiction will lead you down the road to poor health by a direct route—that is the direct negative effect of drugs on your body (we’ve covered this in previous chapters). However, addiction also leads to poor health by a more indirect route. Addiction leads to unhealthy lifestyle choices, which in turn lead to poor health. Some of these unhealthy lifestyle choices include risky behavior such as unsafe sex or needle sharing, poor diet, lack of exercise and sleep, and inability to cope adaptively with stress. In this chapter we are going to focus on helping you to make healthy lifestyle choices so that you can get on the road to recovery and improved health.

We’ll begin by talking about the effects of stress on your health because there is a strong link between stress, addiction, and health.




Stress can be thought of and defined in many different ways. For purposes of this chapter, let's think of stress as any change you must adjust to. We call the event or situation that stresses us the "stressor." We usually think of stressors as negative events, but stressors can also be positive events (such as a holiday, a wedding, a graduation, etc.). The important point to remember is that the stressor, in and of itself, is not what is harmful—it's how you cope with the stressor that matters.

When you don't cope well with stress, it can have multiple effects on physical and mental health:

- Stress makes you more susceptible to infection. In another chapter we talked about the immune system and the role of Natural Killer cells in fighting infections, including HIV. Research studies have shown that the strength of these Natural Killer cells is linked to coping well with stress. So managing stress is particularly important for people who are infected with HIV.
- Stress increases the risk for heart disease, hypertension, stroke, and other illnesses. As we've discussed in previous chapters, drug use also puts you at risk for these illnesses, so you place yourself in double jeopardy if you don't cope well with stress.
- Stress interferes with digestion and sleep. As we'll discuss later, keeping up your strength by getting enough rest and eating well are extremely important to someone living with HIV.
- Stress leads to depression and anxiety. Depression and anxiety, in turn, can be triggers for drug use, which can itself cause depression and anxiety, thus creating a dangerous cycle of self-medication.
- Stress interferes with concentration, logical thinking, and decision making. Staying healthy requires being able to make healthy choices. You won't make healthy choices if you can't think straight.
- Stress can leave you feeling rundown and exhausted, which can result in demoralization, and a reduction in your motivation to continue your journey of recovery.

How do you know when you're stressed?

## **SIGNS OF STRESS**

		
<b>PHYSICAL</b>	<b>EMOTIONAL</b>	<b>FAMILY/SOCIAL</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Muscle Tension</li><li>• Upset Stomach</li><li>• Headaches</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Anxiety</li><li>• Anger</li><li>• Depression</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Domestic Violence</li><li>• Family Problems</li><li>• Work Impairment</li></ul>

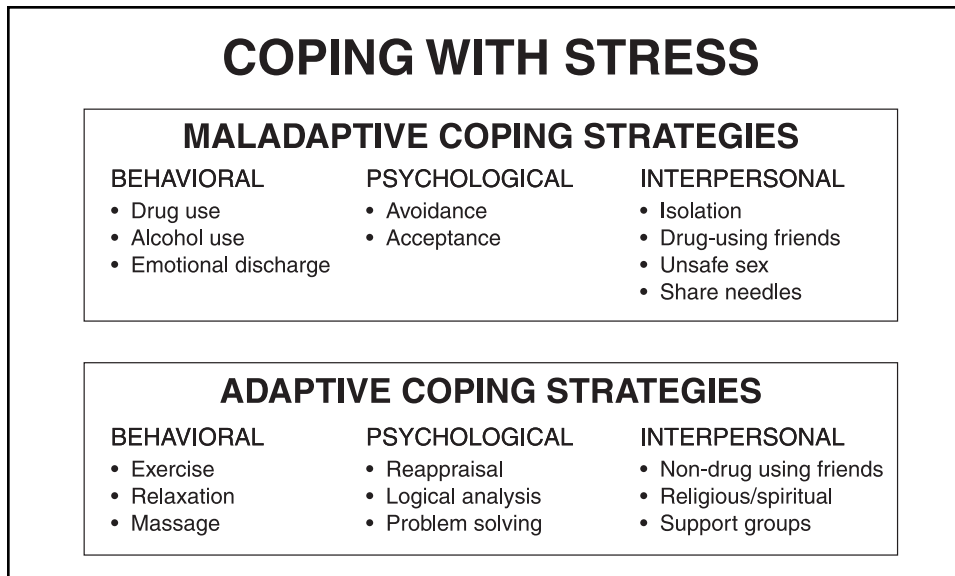
As shown in the illustration, we have grouped the signs of stress into three categories. The first category shown is physical. Some physical signs of stress are muscle tension, upset stomach, headaches. Different people have different physical signs of stress. What physical symptoms do **you** experience when you are stressed?

The second category is emotional. Some emotional signs of stress are anxiety, anger, depression. What emotional symptoms do you experience in response to stress?

The last category is family and social problems. This might include not being able to work well or having problems getting along with your family and friends, and may even include domestic violence. Some people take out their stress on family members. Or, as shown in the next illustration, some people may take it out on inanimate objects.



This illustration is humorous. Coping with stress by taking it out on other people is not. So let's get serious and talk about ways to cope with stress.



We've categorized coping strategies as behavioral (something you do physically), psychological (something you do mentally), and interpersonal (something you do with other people).

Let's begin with the maladaptive ones:

- Maladaptive behavioral strategies include drug and alcohol use or emotional discharge—that includes yelling, screaming, crying, punching a hole in the wall to get it out of your system.
- Maladaptive psychological strategies include avoiding thinking about whatever is stressing you (pretend it doesn't exist), or prematurely resigning yourself to the fact that you can't do anything about it so you might as well accept it.
- Maladaptive interpersonal strategies include isolating yourself from everyone, or seeking out the company of drug-using friends to get your mind off your troubles.

Resorting to any of these strategies can negatively affect your health. Indeed, the fact that you need to be in addiction treatment means that you used one or more of these maladaptive strategies. Studies have shown that individuals who are addicted to drugs use more of these maladaptive coping strategies than non-drug users. Sadly, use of such maladaptive coping strategies may also be the reason why you became infected with HIV

because they are associated with reckless behavior. But do any of these strategies reduce stress? Do they work? Well, yes and no. They may indeed provide a quick temporary fix; people wouldn't use them if they didn't work; however, the key word is 'temporary.' You may feel okay for a little while, but then the stress will return and be even worse than before.

Adaptive strategies, on the other hand, don't always feel good right away, but they do reduce the effects of stress in the long run.

Adaptive coping strategies include:

- Behavioral strategies, such as exercise, relaxation techniques, massage.
- Psychological strategies, such as positive reappraisal (an example of this would be to think of what is stressing you as positive, perhaps as an opportunity to make changes in your life), logical analysis (that means really analyzing the situation carefully), and problem solving (considering all your options, developing a plan of action, and following through).
- Interpersonal strategies, such as getting support from non-drug-using family and friends, getting support from your religious or spiritual faith, and getting support from people with similar problems.

**There are no quick fixes on the road to recovery.**

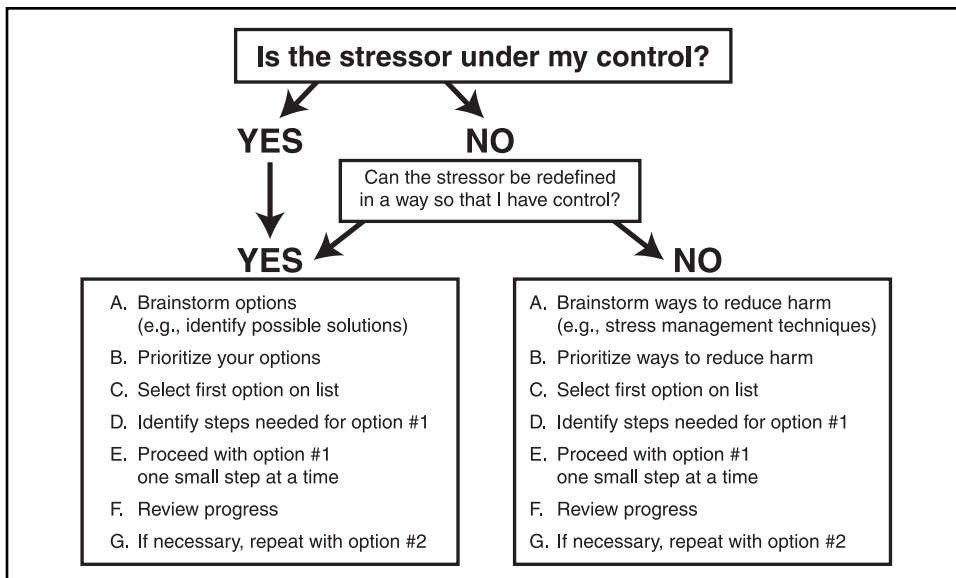
Addiction is characterized by impatience and a desire for quick fixes. One of the lifestyle changes you will therefore need to make to travel the road to recovery is learning to be patient and being willing to learn and practice more adaptive ways of coping with stress. Recovery does not mean a life free of stress, far from it. In fact, when people first begin the journey they may find that their lives actually seem more stressful. This is because they have given up their old, maladaptive, coping strategies and have not yet replaced them. Remember, it takes time to develop new strategies for coping with stress that do not harm your health or the health of others.

If you look back at the last illustration, you'll notice that the behavioral strategies listed are ways to cope with the effects of the stress; they do not change the stressful situation. On the other hand, some of the psychological and interpersonal strategies may actually change the situation to make it less stressful. This is an important distinction to make. Remember the Serenity Prayer.

**SERENITY PRAYER**

*God grant me the serenity  
to accept the things I cannot change,  
the courage to change the things I can,  
and the wisdom to know the difference*

HHRP<sup>+</sup> focuses on learning how to change those things that can be changed (those things that are in your power to change), and finding serenity in acceptance of those things that cannot be changed.



As you can see in this illustration, when faced with a stressful situation, the first thing you should ask yourself is "Is this problem or situation under my control?"

**If you answer “yes—the stressor is under my control,”** the first thing you need to do is to consider all your options. You might want to brainstorm options with a friend or family member, or some people may seek guidance and support through prayer. When you have considered your options, priori-

tize them—that means listing them in order such that the most feasible option is listed first. Then analyze your first option carefully and break it down into small manageable steps. Then tackle one small step at a time so that the task doesn't get overwhelming. Make sure you review your progress as you go along. If the first option isn't working, go to Option #2 and repeat the steps.

**If you answer “no—the stressor is not under my control,”** the first thing to do is consider whether you can redefine the stressor so that it is something you have control over. Let's say the stressor is testing positive for HIV. That is certainly a major stressor, and once you test positive, being infected is not under your control. However, if you redefine the stressor as a chronic medical condition, there are many things that are under your control. For example, you could carefully consider your treatment options and, as we discuss in another chapter, you could then make a specific plan of action with your health care provider as to how you are going to actively participate in your health care. Research has shown that how people cope with learning about being HIV-positive has an effect on their health. People who do not cope well get sicker faster and are more likely to continue to engage in behaviors that place others at risk for HIV infection and themselves at risk for re-infection with medication-resistant strains of the virus and for other infections that can hasten the progression of HIV disease. So, how you cope with stress is far from trivial. It can have an impact on your health and the health of others.

If the stressor cannot be redefined as something under your control, remember that even if you don't have control over the cause of the stress or the solution to it...

**You always have control over how you react to stress.**

**Your task in this case is to reduce the harm of stress to your health.**

We are now going to describe a variety of relaxation techniques that can help reduce the harm of stress to your health. This will be a brief introduction to relaxation—rather like presenting you with a smorgasbord of techniques to sample. Then when you find one or two you like, you can take time learning them. Remember, there are no quick fixes here. Mastering these techniques takes time and effort, but with practice you will get better and better at controlling your body's response to stress.



## Practice Exercise: A Sampling of Stress Management Techniques

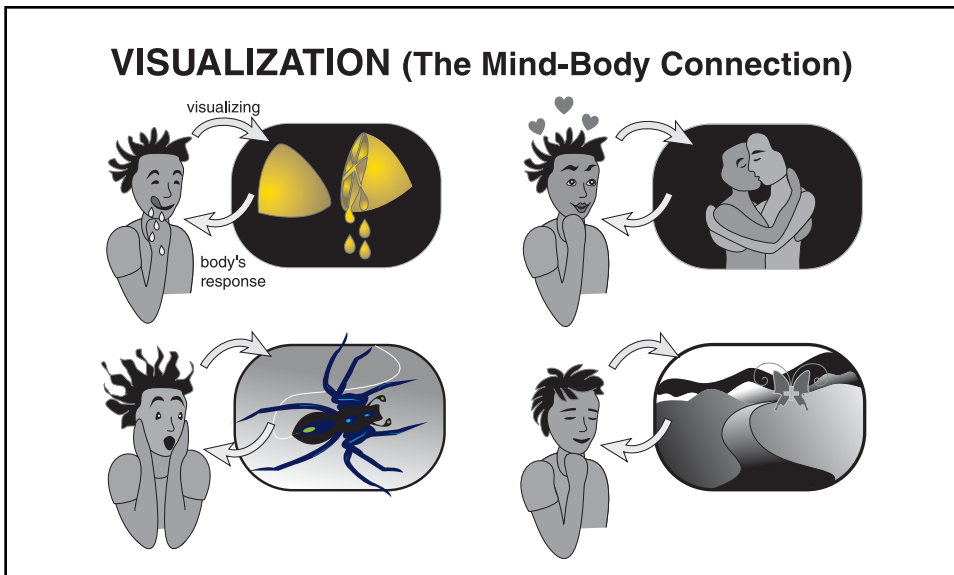
### 1. Introduction to visualization/guided imagery:

The first technique is called visualization or guided imagery. It's a technique that is used not only in medicine, but also in sports to prepare athletes for competition. The purpose of this first demonstration is to show you the connection between your mind and your body.

Get comfortable in your chair. Relax and form a mental picture of a lemon. Imagine a **big, ripe, yellow, lemon**. See it clearly. Imagine what the surface of the lemon's skin looks like. Bright yellow with a rough, crinkled, texture. Now imagine that you are cutting that lemon in half with a knife. As you cut the lemon in half, a spray of lemon juice fills the air. See and smell the spray; it's a big, juicy, lemon and the spray fills the air around you. Now imagine that you are taking half of that lemon and sinking your teeth into it. Really sink your teeth into that juicy lemon, and feel the lemon juice filling your mouth with its sourness. Really experience the taste of that lemon... Do this now.

Is your mouth watering? If you answered yes, you just used your mind to influence your body. You just increased the flow of saliva in your mouth with your mind alone; there's no lemon here.

Let's consider a few more examples of the influences of mental imagery on the physical body:



As this illustration shows there are other examples of the mind–body connection other than the effect of imagining a lemon on the flow of saliva.

**Sexual fantasy.** If you become sexually aroused during a sexual fantasy, you have experienced an excellent demonstration of the power of your mind to influence the flow of blood in your body, because sexual arousal involves increase of blood flow to the genitals.

**Memory of frightening event.** Similarly, when you recall a frightening event or think of something that you fear greatly (perhaps a spider or snake), your heart will start to race or you might feel lightheaded or queasy. This is because your body is gearing itself up for a "fight or flight" response even though there is no current danger, only your image of danger.

**Relaxing Imagery.** Just as imagery of a frightening event can make your body tense, so too can imagery of a relaxing scene cause your body to physically relax. So you can counter the negative effects of stress on your body by doing relaxing imagery or visualizations. Some people find imagining being at the beach very relaxing; for others it may be imagining floating on a cloud. Whatever scene in your imagination represents total peace and serenity will create a relaxation response in your body. Let's do that now.

Get comfortable in your chair. Uncross your legs, place your hands on your thighs, and close your eyes. Think of a special place that is particularly relaxing for you. You don't need to tell anyone what it is. Just form an image of it in your mind. It could be a beach, a forest, a meadow, or a favorite room or comfortable chair—anywhere you feel completely calm, relaxed, and totally at peace. Imagine yourself present in that relaxing scene using all your senses; feel it, smell it, taste it, hear the sounds, see the colors; use your imagination to really feel yourself there in this relaxing place. Fully experience this relaxing place—this is your special place where you can go any time you wish to feel safe and secure and so relaxed. You have the power to give yourself a mini-vacation in this special place in your mind whenever you want. Do this now.

## **2. Introduction to progressive muscle relaxation:**

Another relaxation technique is called progressive muscle relaxation (or PMR). In this technique, you physically tighten and then deeply relax various muscles in your body. It is based on the premise that one responds to stress automatically with muscle tension. The goal of PMR is to replace this response with the experience of relaxation. After learning PMR, your body will recognize muscle tightness as a signal to relax, thus reducing the negative

impact of stress. You can get tapes of this technique which will take you systematically through the relaxation of various muscle groups in your body. If you practice for just 15 minutes twice a day, it only takes about 2 weeks to see the benefits. It can help you cope with stress and may reduce anxiety and insomnia. To give you just a sample of this technique, do a very brief PMR exercise now using just two muscle groups. You will be tightening and relaxing the muscles in your hands and shoulders. When you tighten your muscles, never go to the point of pain, and if you are susceptible to muscle cramps in certain muscles, modify the tightening of those muscles accordingly.

Sit comfortably in your chair; legs uncrossed, hands resting on your thighs.

Concentrate first on your left hand. Now make a tight fist with your left hand. Tight, tighter, very tight. Now relax your left hand. Just let go of all the tension. Feel the tension draining out of your left hand now. Very relaxed. Left hand feeling so very, very relaxed. Left hand completely relaxed on your thigh now.

Concentrate on your right hand now. Now make a tight fist with your right hand. Tight, tighter, very tight. Now relax your right hand. Just let go of all the tension. Feel the tension draining out of your right hand now. Very relaxed. Right hand feeling so very, very relaxed. Right hand completely relaxed on your thigh now.

Concentrate on your shoulders now. Shrug your shoulders so that your shoulders come up around your ears. Hold them there, tight, tight, very tight. Try to get your shoulders up to your ears. Now drop your shoulders down again and feel the tension pour out of the muscles in your shoulders. Feel the muscles in your shoulders relax deeply. So relaxed. Shoulders so relaxed now, so very, very relaxed.

### **3. Introduction to deep breathing and correct breathing habits:**

Deep breathing (from the diaphragm) is another technique that can help you manage stress. When you are stressed, your breathing tends to become very shallow (from your chest).

To reduce stress, begin by focusing on your breath. First place your hands on your diaphragm so that you can feel your diaphragm rise when you inhale and fall when you exhale. Keep your chest still. Now:

Count "1" on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out  
Count "2" on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out

Count “3” on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out.  
Count “4” on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out  
Count “5” on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out  
Count “6” on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out.  
Count “7” on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out  
Count “8” on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out  
Count “9” on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out.  
Count “10” on breath in...(hold the breath)...and think "relax" on breath out.

If you don't have time to do deep breathing, you always have time for a sigh. Everyone knows what a sigh is. It seems to be an automatic response that your body makes when it is feeling tired or stressed. You can use this response to your advantage in stressful situations. Just take a deep breath and as you exhale slowly say “Ahhhhhhh.” Imagine that all the tension is leaving your body with your sigh. Do this now.

Hands on your diaphragm and feel it expand as you breathe in, contract as you breathe out. Take a deep breath in. Now exhale very slowly, and as you do so, say ‘Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh.’ Once more. Deep breath in...and out ‘Ahhhhhhhhhhhh.’

#### **4. Positive affirmations/Autogenic Training:**

The last technique involves listening to your inner voice. What we tell ourselves influences how we feel. Negative self-talk, such as “I'm no good, I need a fix, I can't cope with this” has a powerful effect on you. It influences your body's response to stress and it influences your behavioral response. When you tell yourself you can't cope, your body believes you and acts accordingly, creating a cascade of chemical and physiological responses. Furthermore, you tell yourself you can't cope, you are unlikely to try any coping strategies that could reduce your stress.

So, be very careful what you tell yourself.

Affirmations are positive self-statements. When you are stressed, if you tell yourself “I am calm” your body will respond accordingly. Warmth and heaviness are your body's natural responses to relaxation. A technique called "autogenic training" is based on the use of positive self-statements that increase feelings of warmth and heaviness in parts of the body. Autogenic Training has been used by NASA to train astronauts to control nausea caused by weightlessness in space, and is used for a number of health related problems, including controlling nausea from chemotherapy. It has also

been used at Yale to help addicted individuals reduce craving for drugs. It is similar to PMR in that you systematically focus on various parts of your body; however, in autogenic training you do not move the muscles, instead you repeat specific statements, such as “my hands are warm and heavy.” Let’s try a very brief sample of autogenic training now.

Get comfortable. Uncross your legs. Place your hands on your thighs. Read each statement and then repeat it to yourself. Do not say it out loud. Just repeat the statement to yourself.

‘My hands are warm’ repeat to yourself ‘my hands are warm’...

‘My hands are heavy’ repeat to yourself ‘my hands are heavy’...

‘My hands are warm and heavy’ repeat to yourself ‘my hands are warm and heavy’

‘My shoulders are warm’ repeat to yourself ‘my shoulders are warm’

‘My shoulder are heavy’ repeat to yourself ‘my shoulders are heavy’

‘My shoulders are warm and heavy’ repeat to yourself ‘my shoulders are warm and heavy.’

Now open your eyes."

With daily practice, what actually happens in your body when you use this technique is that you cause physical changes to occur, such as an increase in blood flow to these muscles which allows the muscles to relax. You can purchase audiotapes of this relaxation strategy or you can simply close your eyes and repeat these statements as you focus on your body from head to toe.

Another way to use affirmations or positive self-statements is to write positive statements on cards and place them in conspicuous places that you can see several times during the day. For example, you could write on a card “I am calm,” or “I can handle this” and then place it on your bathroom mirror. Whenever you see the card, it will remind you to use your coping strategies to protect your health against stress.

These are just brief samples of four different relaxation techniques. There are many more and most are available commercially on audio and video tapes. We strongly encourage you to experiment with different techniques, to find one or two that are right for you. We end each chapter with a brief relaxation exercise because it is an integral part of the HHRP<sup>+</sup> approach. However, it is up to you to incorporate it into your new healthy lifestyle.

## Exercise

Stress management is one component of a healthy lifestyle; other components include exercising and getting adequate sleep. Should people who are HIV-positive exercise?

Definitely, in moderation, and never to the point of exhaustion.

Regular exercise can have beneficial effects on the immune system; it can also help reduce stress and depression, and can help reduce urges to use drugs. It is important, however, that you do not over-exert yourself.

Exercise should be done regularly and in moderation. It is important to have a number of different exercises to choose from that you can do daily. If you aren't feeling well one day, you can choose gentle stretching exercises and on other days you can do something a little more strenuous. It's important to get into the exercise habit. Brisk walking is a wonderful exercise that can be done by almost everyone.

## Sleep

Your decision to embark on this journey toward maintaining and improving your health means that you need to become very sensitive to your body; you will need to get to know your body and its needs, to listen to it, and to respond to it. For example, when your body tells you it is tired, you should rest.

Why is it important to get sufficient sleep?

When you are fatigued your resistance is lowered not only to infection, but also to drug use. Remember **H.A.L.T**—it stands for **Hungry, Angry, Lonely, Tired**—each of these states can be triggers for drug use. Sometimes when people feel tired and run down they think using drugs or alcohol will help. It may seem like it is helping for a few moments, but in the long-run it makes it worse. Getting sufficient sleep is essential for individuals with HIV. If you have difficulty getting the rest you need, it is important for your health that you address this problem.

At the end of this chapter you will find three worksheets that provide a menu of choices for stress management, exercise, and getting a good night's sleep. Additional information on these subjects is also available from your library, bookstore, and health care provider. You will notice that at the bottom of each worksheet there is a box, in which you can write down your choice of relaxation, exercise, and sleep technique that you are willing to commit to doing every day during the coming week. It's important to set

aside a certain time each day for these activities. Making a commitment to yourself to begin incorporating these strategies into your daily life is an excellent way for you to begin making a commitment to a new and healthy lifestyle.

## **Nutrition and HIV**

Another very important area of your life that you **do** have control over is nutrition. At the end of this chapter you will find a brochure entitled Nutrition and HIV (reprinted with permission; Ross Products Division of Abbott Laboratories, 625 Cleveland Avenue, Columbus, OH 43215 ©1994). Turn to this brochure now and review it carefully. Let's go over the major points. It is important for individuals infected with HIV to keep their weight up. To do this you need to increase your caloric intake and increase the protein in your diet. There are several ways to handle common appetite problems experienced by people with HIV. For example, if you are nauseated you should eat something cold or salty, but avoid eating hot or greasy foods. Food safety is also very important. The key word is **wash**—wash everything (hands, utensils, cutting boards) often, because HIV makes you particularly susceptible to food-borne illnesses. Also, make sure foods are fresh. Check expiration dates, don't eat canned food if the cans have bulges or dents, and never thaw frozen food at room temperature. Eating a nutritious diet and taking care to store and prepare food safely is essential for living a healthy lifestyle. At the end of this chapter, you will find daily and weekly menu planners and a grocery list. Duplicate these pages and use them to help you plan and implement any changes you need to make in your diet.

## **Review**

Let's review what we've covered so far. We talked about lifestyle choices that can have an effect on your health. Your decision to be drug-free is an essential first step to a healthier lifestyle. Drug use affects your health both directly and indirectly. The drug itself has a direct and harmful effect on your body. Addiction also affects your health indirectly because it leads to an unhealthy lifestyle which includes risky behavior, such as unsafe sex or needle sharing, poor diet, lack of exercise and sleep, and an inability to cope well with stress, each of which leads to poor health. We talked about the signs of stress and the effect of stress on your health, which may include increased susceptibility to infection, heart disease, and poor decision making. We defined stress as any change you must adjust to. Stress is a normal part of life, and can be caused by positive as well as negative events. What's important to your health is how you cope with all the stresses of daily life.

We talked about the importance of identifying those stressors you have control over and those you don't. If you have some control over the source of the stress you need to identify and prioritize your options. Then take your best option and break it down into small, manageable steps. Then, one step at a time, see if this option works for you. If it doesn't, try the next option on your list. If, on the other hand, you do not have control over the source of the stress, remember that your response to the stress is always under your control. To manage your body's response to the stress you can do relaxation exercises, such as visualization, progressive muscle relaxation, deep breathing, or positive affirmations. You may also be able to redefine the stressor, so that you do have some control. Finally, we talked about exercise, sleep, and nutrition. Exercise regularly, but never exercise to the point of exhaustion; get adequate rest; eat a nutritious diet, and store and prepare foods safely. We touched only briefly on a number of important healthy lifestyle choices that you can make to improve your health. You are strongly encouraged to get more detailed information from your health care provider, library, or bookstore.

### **Practice Exercise: Taking Steps to Manage Your Stress**

#### **Instructions:**

1. Listed below are the steps to coping well with a stressful situation. The steps have been scrambled so that they are not in the correct order. Your task is to put them in the correct order.

*Scrambled steps:*

- a. Prioritize your options.
- b. Select first option on list.
- c. Brainstorm options with friends or family.
- d. If necessary, repeat with option #2.
- e. Review progress.
- f. Identify steps needed for option #1.
- g. Proceed with option #1 one small step at a time.
- h. Redefine the answer as something you can control, such as:

- 
2. Once you know the steps well enough to put them in the correct order, identify the situation in your life that you currently find the most stressful, and use these steps to reduce your stress.

**Note:** correct order of steps is 1(h), 2(c), 3(a), 4(b), 5(f), 6(g), 7(e), 8(d)



## Quiz

- 1. What is the essential *first* step to a healthier lifestyle?**
  - a. taking more vitamins
  - b. making the decision to be abstinent from street drugs
  - c. exercising regularly to the point of exhaustion
  - d. none of the above
  
- 2. If you don't cope well with stress, it can:**
  - a. increase your susceptibility to infection
  - b. increase your risk for heart disease
  - c. interfere with good decision making
  - d. all of the above
  
- 3. Even if the cause of what is stressing you is out of your control, you know that:**
  - a. you always have control over your response to the stress
  - b. you can protect your health by doing relaxation exercises
  - c. you may be able to redefine it as something you can control
  - d. all of the above
  
- 4. To prevent food borne illnesses:**
  - a. eat only raw meat, fish, and eggs
  - b. eat canned food even if the cans have bulges or dents
  - c. wash everything thoroughly—hands, utensils, cutting boards
  - d. always thaw frozen food at room temperature
  
- 5. Complete this sentence: People with HIV should...**
  - a. increase the number of calories and protein in their meals
  - b. reduce calorie intake to avoid nausea and diarrhea
  - c. eat hot greasy foods when feeling nauseated
  - d. all of the above

### **Practice Exercise: Stress Management/Relaxation**

We recommend that you conclude each chapter by doing a ten-minute relaxation exercise. Use this time to practice one of the techniques that we describe in this chapter. Dim the lights, get comfortable in your chair, uncross your legs, and sit quietly with your eyes closed. Remember that learning to relax is a skill that takes practice, so if you feel restless at first, just remind yourself that this is a ten-minute gift of quiet time that you give to yourself. With practice, you can use meditation and relaxation in many areas of your life including helping you manage stress and maintain your health. So use this time now to practice becoming centered, relaxed, and focused on your new healthy lifestyle.

## Stress Management

Relaxation techniques decrease the negative health consequences of stress.

### Menu of relaxation techniques to try:

**Visualization/guided imagery**

**Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR)**

**Deep breathing**

**The Relaxing Sigh**

**Positive affirmations**

**Autogenic training**

**Meditation**

Relaxation techniques are available commercially on audio and video tape, or you can create your own. Books are available at your library and book stores.

Relaxation takes practice. Devote at least 15 minutes twice daily to your relaxation technique. You should notice results within two weeks.

This week I commit to do the following stress management technique twice daily at \_\_\_\_\_ (time) and \_\_\_\_\_ (time) for at least 15 minutes:

\_\_\_\_\_ (technique)

**I am calm and relaxed.**

## Exercise

Moderate exercise may strengthen your immune system, increase your energy level and self-esteem, and decrease stress and anxiety.

**Menu of exercises to try** (in moderation):

**Gentle stretching**

**Brisk Walking**

**Swimming**

**Weight training**

**Yoga**

**Tai Chi**

**Cycling**

**Skipping rope**

**Dancing**

*Never exercise to the point of exhaustion.*

*Check with your health care provider before beginning any exercise program.*

This week I commit to do the following exercise daily at \_\_\_\_\_ (time)  
for at least 15 minutes: \_\_\_\_\_ (exercise)

## Sleep

1. Establish a sleep schedule: Go to bed and get up at around the same time each day.
2. Get sufficient sleep. Healthy adults require eight to eight-and-a-half hours of sleep per night.
3. Use your bedroom only for sleeping or sleep-related activities.
4. Create a sleep-promoting environment. Your bedroom should be cool, quiet, and without any bright light shining in the windows.
5. Don't drink alcohol or caffeinated beverages within six hours of bedtime and don't smoke immediately before going to bed.
6. Have a glass of milk or light carbohydrate snack before bedtime.
7. Relax for at least 30 minutes before bedtime.
8. If you are not asleep within 30 minutes, get up and engage in a quiet activity until you feel sleepy.
9. Exercise regularly, but not right before bedtime.
10. If you take a nap during the day, do not sleep for more than 30 minutes, and don't nap after 3 p.m.

This week I commit to trying the following strategy in order to improve my sleep: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Consult your health care provider if your sleep problems persist.**

## Nutrition and HIV



### Getting the Benefits of Good Nutrition

Good nutrition is important for everyone. But it's essential for people infected with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV). This virus affects the body's ability to fight infection and causes AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome).

One of the key components of treatment for HIV infection is a nutritious diet. Timing is important—the sooner good nutrition starts, the more successful you can be at staying healthier. Eating enough of the right balance of foods may help prevent weight loss and fatigue, improve comfort and sense of well-being, and contribute to quality of life.

This booklet presents information you can use to plan a healthy diet. It also suggests ways to help you overcome eating problems resulting from your illness or medical treatment.

### Building a Nutritious Diet

Protein, carbohydrate, fat, vitamins, minerals, and water are the nutrients needed to maintain body functions. A diet containing the right balance of these nutrients promotes health and well-being. Use the following general guidelines to plan a diet that gives your body enough of these nutrients.

Fat and lactose (milk sugar) can be hard to digest. If you begin experiencing nausea or diarrhea, cut back on fat and/or lactose until symptoms improve. And remember, try different foods to find out which ones agree with you; everyone responds differently to various foods and to the same food from one time it's eaten to the next.

#### Every day...

- Drink two cups or more of lowfat milk or buttermilk, or substitute two or three servings of lowfat cheese, cottage cheese, yogurt, ice cream, custard, or pudding made with milk.
- Eat two or more 2- to 3-ounce servings of lean meat or other foods containing protein, such as eggs, fish, poultry, dried beans and peas, peanut butter, and nuts and seeds.
- Eat or drink two or more half-cup servings of fresh, frozen, or canned fruit or fruit juice. At least one of the servings should be a citrus fruit or juice. Wash fresh fruit thoroughly before cooking or eating.
- Eat three or more half-cup servings of vegetables. At least one serving should be a dark-green, leafy vegetable or a yellow vegetable. Wash fresh vegetables thoroughly before cooking or eating.
- Eat six or more servings of bread or other baked goods, cereal, rice, pasta, or grain products.
- Eat other foods such as desserts, margarine, condiments, and beverages when you want them. These foods add flavor, variety, and calories to your diet.

### **Power-Packing Your Diet**

Increasing the calorie and protein content of your diet is a good habit to start right now. For other ways to boost calories and protein without increasing serving sizes, try the following suggestions. You may need to modify them if you're having a problem with diarrhea, fat, or lactose intolerance (see "Solving Problems").

#### **To add calories...**

- In cooking, use heavy cream, whole milk, or evaporated whole milk instead of water whenever possible.
- Top baked potatoes, vegetables, and fruits with sour cream. One tablespoon adds about 30 Calories.
- Use butter or margarine on hot foods such as toast, vegetables, cooked cereals, and rice. One teaspoon adds about 35 Calories.
- Spread bagels and toast with cream cheese. One tablespoon adds about 50 Calories.
- Eat fruits canned in heavy syrup. Stir canned fruit into yogurt or use it to top cereal and ice cream and other desserts.
- Sweeten toast, cereals, and fruits with sugar, jelly, and honey

#### **To add protein...**

- Make "double-strength milk" by adding nonfat dry milk powder to regular whole milk. Chill well before drinking to enhance the flavor. Use double-strength milk in cooking and for milkshakes.
- Add grated cheese to cream sauces, casseroles, and vegetables. One ounce of American cheese contains approximately 7 grams (g) of protein.
- Serve cottage cheese with canned fruit. One-half cup of cottage cheese provides about 15 g of protein.
- Have peanut butter with an apple, banana, or pear; spread it on crackers; or use it as a sandwich spread with jelly, jam, or preserves. One tablespoon of peanut butter provides about 95 Calories and 4 g of protein.
- Blend finely chopped hard-cooked eggs into sauces, soups, and casseroles. One large egg provides about 7 g of protein. Don't eat raw or soft-cooked ("sunny-side up") eggs or foods containing raw eggs.

#### **To add complete nutrition...**

There's an alternative strategy for adding calories and protein, as well as carbohydrates, fat, vitamins, and minerals, when your nutritional intake is less than ideal. Advera® Specialized, Complete Nutrition is a nutritional product specifically designed for people with HIV infection or AIDS. Advera is high in calories to meet the body's increased need for them. It's also high in protein and low in fat, and has fiber to maintain normal bowel function. Advera may be the answer when you...

- Don't feel like eating.
- Don't have the time or energy to fix a balanced meal.
- Are consistently not eating enough of the right kinds of foods and recognize the need for good nutrition.

Consult your physician regarding your specific needs.

Advera® is available in chocolate, vanilla and orange cream flavors. It tastes best chilled.

## Preventing Illness Caused by Improper Food Handling

Guard against food-borne illnesses. When your immune system is suppressed, your body becomes less effective at fighting bacteria that can grow in improperly handled foods. Food-borne illnesses are preventable when food is stored, prepared, and served properly. The following guidelines can help you lower your risk of food-borne illnesses.

- Store foods at safe temperatures—cold food below 40° F, hot food above 140°F. Don't leave food at room temperature for more than 2 hours.
- Thaw frozen food in a refrigerator or defrost in a microwave oven. Don't thaw food at room temperature.
- Refrigerate or freeze perishable items as soon as possible. Use airtight containers, plastic wrap, or aluminum foil to protect opened foods.
- Buy foods in amounts that can be eaten before they spoil. Never use food you think may be spoiled. Don't use cans with bulges or those with leaks or dents along the seams.
- Wash your hands thoroughly with warm, soapy water before handling or eating food.
- Wash fresh fruits and vegetables before eating or cooking them.
- Use a cutting board made of plastic or marble, not wood. Use separate cutting boards for raw and cooked foods. Wash all food preparation utensils in hot, soapy water.
- Thoroughly cook meat, fish, poultry, and eggs. Don't eat raw meat, raw seafood, or raw fish dishes, such as sushi.
- Avoid luncheon meats and cheeses from the deli case; they may contain harmful bacteria from improper food handling. Use prepackaged, processed meats and cheeses instead.
- Use only pasteurized milk products.
- Heat leftovers thoroughly to an internal temperature of 165°F

## Solving Problems

Eat well when you feel well: Keep high-calorie snacks (see pages 4 and 5, "Power-Packing Your Diet") available for when your appetite is good—for example, raisins and other dried fruits, peanut butter or cheese with crackers, yogurt, and nuts and seeds.

Sometimes you may have symptoms that interfere with eating. The following suggestions will help you meet nutritional needs, conserve energy or soothe an upset stomach during these times.

### When you're tired...

- Take advantage of the nutritious meals available in the frozen-food section of your grocery store.
- Accept friends' and relatives' offers to help prepare food.
- Freeze leftovers and extra portions for later.
- Check into home food-delivery services such as "Meals on Wheels" or carry-out and delivery services offered by many restaurants.
- Use Advera® as an oral supplement or meal replacement when you can't prepare or eat a full meal.



### **When you're nauseated...**

- Wait until you feel better to eat full meals. Eat small, frequent meals rather than three large ones.
- Sip cool beverages, such as clear fruit juices and drinks and carbonated beverages (ginger ale, lemon-lime). Eat fruit ices, dry toast (if your mouth and/or throat is sore, dunk toast in juice or tea to soften), or crackers to calm your stomach.
- Choose bland foods that are not greasy or too sweet, such as broth with crackers, gelatin with fruit, and apple juice.
- Eat cold main courses—chicken salad instead of hot fried chicken, for example. Stay out of the kitchen when food is being prepared, and eat in well-ventilated areas. The smell of food or cooking can add to feelings of nausea.
- Ask your doctor about medicine to control nausea.

### **When you have diarrhea...**

- Consider using a rehydration product such as EqualYTE® Enteral Rehydration Solution that provides needed electrolytes and fluid to prevent dehydration. Beverages such as fruit juices (apricot and pear nectar, apple juice) or Popsicles® and gelatin can be used for additional fluids.
- Drink liquids between meals rather than with meals.
- Because they can make diarrhea worse, decrease or avoid foods and drinks that contain fat, such as cream, sour cream, cream sauce, luncheon meats, bacon, sausage, regular cheeses, oil, mayonnaise, salad dressing, nuts, avocados, olives, peanut butter, butter and margarine, and high-fat snack foods such as potato and corn chips. Try lowfat alternatives (cheeses, sour cream, and salad dressings, for example).
- Decrease or avoid lactose-containing foods while you have diarrhea. Lactose-containing foods include milk; milk powder; ice cream; milk-containing desserts, soups, and baked goods; and cheese and yogurt. Try lactose-free or lactose-reduced dairy products.
- Select foods that are easily digested and absorbed such as peeled, cooked fruits and vegetables, bananas, applesauce, cooked cereal, and rice.
- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Ask your doctor, dietitian, or nurse about using Advera® which is nutritionally complete and low in fat, and contains fiber to help maintain bowel function.
- Avoid foods that have a laxative effect (prunes and prune juice, raw fruits and vegetables) when you have diarrhea. They may make the diarrhea worse.
- Don't eat or drink foods and beverages that contain caffeine such as coffee, tea, cola, and chocolate.

### **When your mouth and throat are sore...**

- Drink soothing beverages such as apple juice, fruit nectars, and milk (if diarrhea is not a problem). A sore mouth or throat may be irritated by highly spiced foods and carbonated drinks or liquids containing salt (such as broth or vegetable juice), or those containing acid (such as orange juice).
- Drink liquids and semisolid foods through a straw.
- Select soft, moist foods such as macaroni and cheese; casseroles; canned fruits and ripe, peeled, soft fresh fruits\* (bananas, pears, peaches); scrambled eggs; stews; mashed pota-

## Healthy Lifestyle Choices

toes with gravy; puddings and custards; and sherbets, yogurt, ice cream, and milkshakes. Avoid sticky, hard-to-swallow foods such as peanut butter and dry, rough foods such as popcorn, potato chips, and raw vegetables that can irritate sensitive. Dunk toast, cookies, doughnuts, and crackers in milk, tea, juice, or soup to soften them and make them easier to swallow.

- Use melted butter or margarine, gravy, broth, sauces, or syrup to moisten food.
- Make sure foods and beverages are at room temperature before eating or drinking them. Avoid foods that are very hot or very cold.
- Use Advera® as an oral supplement or meal replacement sipped through a straw.
- Talk to your doctor about medicine to numb your mouth and throat.

### **When your sense of taste changes...**

- If red meat tastes bitter, select other foods containing protein such as cheese, eggs, poultry, yogurt, tuna, and peanut butter. Try marinating meat in soy sauce, wine, or fruit juice.
- Serve protein foods cold or at room temperature.
- Add interest to foods with seasonings and flavorings such as basil, oregano, garlic, onion, bacon bits, and lemon and lime juices.
- Add fresh or canned fruit to milkshakes and ice cream.
- Drink liquids with solid foods.
- Use Advera® as an oral supplement or meal replacement.

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\*Avoid fresh fruit if diarrhea is a problem.

## Daily Meal Planner

**Day of the week**

**Date**

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Breakfast

Steps to complete the meal

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Lunch

Steps to complete the meal

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Dinner

Steps to complete the meal

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## Weekly Meal Planner

for the week of \_\_\_\_\_

### Sunday

### Things to buy

Breakfast

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Lunch

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Dinner

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### Monday

### Things to buy

Breakfast

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Lunch

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Dinner

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### Tuesday

### Things to buy

Breakfast

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Lunch

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Dinner

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### Wednesday

### Things to buy

Breakfast

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Lunch

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Dinner

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Healthy Lifestyle Choices

**Thursday**

Things to buy

Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_

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Lunch \_\_\_\_\_

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Dinner \_\_\_\_\_

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**Friday**

Things to buy

Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_

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Lunch \_\_\_\_\_

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Dinner \_\_\_\_\_

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**Saturday**

Things to buy

Breakfast \_\_\_\_\_

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Lunch \_\_\_\_\_

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Dinner \_\_\_\_\_

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Additional items to buy:

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## Grocery List

**Dairy**

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**Deli**

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**Chips/Crackers**

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**Canned goods**

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**Baking supplies**

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**Produce**

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**Cereals**

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**Pet food/Cleaners**

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**Meat and fish**

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**Frozen foods**

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**Other**

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**Bakery/Breads**

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**Paper products**

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**Beverages**

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