

Good Nutrition for Quality of Life of PLWHA (People Living with HIV/AIDS)

Siti Rahayu Nadhiroh
Public Health School - Airlangga University

ABSTRACT

HIV/AIDS have infected more than 40 million people around the world, since the first case was reported in 1981. In Indonesia, estimated 169 thousand till 216 thousand people have contagious of the virus. Considering the spread of HIV/AIDS which progressively extend and can be groggy of nation life, especially young generation, we need the effort of HIV/AIDS preventing and overcoming effectively. Besides that, improving quality of life of PLWHA (people living with HIV/AIDS) is essential to maintain health and prolong lives of them. Good nutrition can contribute to the wellness and sense of wellbeing of the PLWHA at all stages of the disease and may even prolong life. Good nutrition means eating foods that supply the body with all the nutrients that are needed daily. We get all the nutrients from starchy foods, fats and oils, proteins, vitamins, minerals and water. The right balance of these nutrients promotes health. Good nutrition help to maintain ideal body weight of PLWHA. This will give stronger immunity and resistance to infection. The next, good nutrition will reduce the sickness and make slower HIV/AIDS disease progression. If PLWHA get a wellness condition, they will eat well and have a good appetite. So, PLWHA can reach a better life and get a good quality of life. Thereby, Nutrition can assist in mitigating the impacts of HIV/AIDS at the individual, household and community. A good nutrition is one of the simplest way of helping people live with HIV/AIDS to improve the life quality and life expectancy.

Key words: HIV/AIDS, good nutrition, quality of life

INTRODUCTION

AIDS has emerged as one of the most serious diseases facing the developing world. Since the first case was reported in 1981, HIV/AIDS have infected more than 40 million people around the world. In Indonesia, the recent situation indicated HIV/AIDS cases mount sharply and quickly since finding of in 1987. Data from Depkes RI (till December 2006) showed, there were 8194 AIDS cumulatif cases and killed 1871 people. The data did not explain the number truthfully as that happened at iceberg phenomenon. Estimated, 169 thousand till 216 thousand people in Indonesia have contagious of the virus. Boulton (2004) said, although the big attention focused on overcoming AIDS problem in Africa and western country nowadays, but some expert warned about the danger of AIDS in the three big country in Asia. Those are China, India and Indonesia.

Considering the spread of HIV/AIDS which progressively extend and can be groggy of nation life, especially young generation, we need the effort of HIV/AIDS preventing and overcoming effectively. Besides that, improving quality of life of PLWHA (people living with HIV/AIDS) is essential to maintain health and prolong lives of them.

Nutritionally adequate food in both quantity and quality are required because it will improve the life quality and life expectancy of PLWHA. Almost of them live in developing countries where healthcare, resources and drugs are scarce. So a balanced diet is a positive way of responding to the illness.

Providing nutritional care and support for people living with HIV/AIDS is an important part of caring at all stages of the disease. Optimal nutrition can help boost immune function, maximize the effectiveness of antiretroviral therapy, reduce the risk of chronic illnesses such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease, and contribute to a better overall quality of life (Highleyman, 2006).

This matter being interesting for discussed. How HIV/AIDS substantially affects one's quality of life. What the relationship between nutrition and HIV/AIDS, and how nutrition can contribute to a better quality of life of PLWHA.

HIV/AIDS AND THE IMPACT ON QUALITY OF LIFE

HIV/AIDS substantially affects one's quality of life in many ways such as physical, social, psychological, and sexual condition. The most prevalent constrain often faced were in the psycho-social domain, including financial problems, worry about disease progression, worry about the family and distress about losing others from HIV.

AIDS kills the most productive and reproductively active members of society, thus increasing the number of dependent household members, reducing household productivity and caring capacity, and interrupting the transfer of local knowledge and skills from one generation to the next (Piot, 2002). This condition has influenced significantly to the PLWHA's quality of life.

Quality of life is a multi-dimensional concept whose definition and assessment remains controversial. Quality