



HIV RESOURCE REVIEW

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SUBSTANCE ABUSE, HIV AND NUTRITION - PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

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It is estimated that 25 % of HIV-positive Americans were infected via injection drug use. ⁽¹⁾ The number of people who currently abuse illicit drugs and/or alcohol is not known but is likely to be a disproportionately larger percentage than in the general population. Substance abuse implies a host of additional considerations in medical treatment in general (refer to May/June 2000 Review issue) and nutritional management in particular. The aim of this review is to discuss these considerations, give an overview of substance abuse treatment and an example of how to integrate nutrition into such treatment.

NUTRITION PROBLEMS RELATED TO SUBSTANCE ABUSE

The relationship between alcohol abuse and nutrition was well documented years ago. ⁽²⁻⁷⁾ (Note that the use of "alcohol" in this review refers to ethanol, specifically found in beer, wine and distilled spirits.) It should be noted that available literature on alcohol and nutrition for more recent years is limited. The nutritional effects of other commonly abused drugs such as cocaine, marijuana and opioids have been studied less, but certainly have significant



ALTERNATIVE FOCUS: NIGELLA SATIVA (BLACK SEED)

Rachel Stern, MS, RD, CNS is a nutritionist for the North Jersey Community Research Initiative in Newark, NJ. She has also worked at the Women's Infectious Disease Clinic at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of NJ. Other experience includes positions at WIC, Head Start, Blue Cross/Blue Shield of New Jersey, Columbia University Institute of Reproduction, Research Corporation, and University of Wisconsin Department of Pediatrics.

Black seed or *Nigella sativa* may be used in foods, or as a therapeutic agent. Supplements are capsules of the ground seed, often mixed with other herbs. Published studies on its pharmacological activity are few and limited to in-vitro* or small animals. Very preliminary evidence is suggestive of a hepato-protective effect. It may also

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SUBSTANCE ABUSE, HIV AND NUTRITION- PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

TABLE 1. EFFECTS OF SUBSTANCE USE ON NUTRITIONAL STATUS
Altered food and liquid intake
Altered taste preferences
Changes in specific nutrient status and metabolism
Nutrition-related physiological problems (e.g. impaired gastric release, high blood cholesterol levels, etc.)
Major changes in food selection and consumption resulting in marked weight gain or loss

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 EXERCISE RECOMMENDATIONS
 DMSO
 ABACAVIR

Editor's Corner

The HIV ReSource Review is a bimonthly update on practical and timely nutrition resources. Articles provide a review of HIV-related research with a focus on nutrition. Feature articles are the result of multiple literature searches and searches on the World Wide Web. Article information is supplemented by reviewing conference proceedings and the recommendations of experts.

Newsletter Purpose

- * Provide important, time-saving, HIV-related nutrition information from the most recent sources
- * Help busy nutrition professionals and others acquire the resources needed to counsel HIV-challenged individuals effectively

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