

Nutrition, Growth, & Metabolism

We looked at youth living with perinatal HIV (PHIV) and perinatal HIV exposure but uninfected (PHEU). We found that some of these youth may have health problems with the way their bodies grow and process energy.

Findings

Some youth living with **PHIV** may have too much cholesterol in their bodies or more fat around the stomach area. Their immune systems also tended to be more activated overall (inflammation).

These factors may put them at higher risk for diseases that affect the heart.

Youth living with **PHEU** with high weight tend to have higher blood pressure compared to children of the same size who were not exposed to HIV.

We also found that youth living with either **PHIV** or **PHEU** often do not have enough vitamin D in their bodies. This can damage their bone health.



What can you do?



When possible, eat a diet with lots of whole grains, lots of fruits and vegetables, and low amounts of fat. Finding fresh produce can be hard in some places. Frozen or canned fruits and vegetables are also good options.



Exercise to keep your body and heart healthy. It may be hard to find time or a place to exercise. If you can't exercise outside, try looking on YouTube for exercise routines you can do in your house.



Ask your doctor if you need to eat more foods with vitamin D, or if you need to take a vitamin pill to get enough.



Ask your doctor or study coordinator if you have questions about the long-term impacts of ART on your health.



Advocate for research on nutrition, growth, and metabolism in youth affected by HIV. Contact your study coordinator to join the PHACS Community Advisory Board or another local advocacy organization.