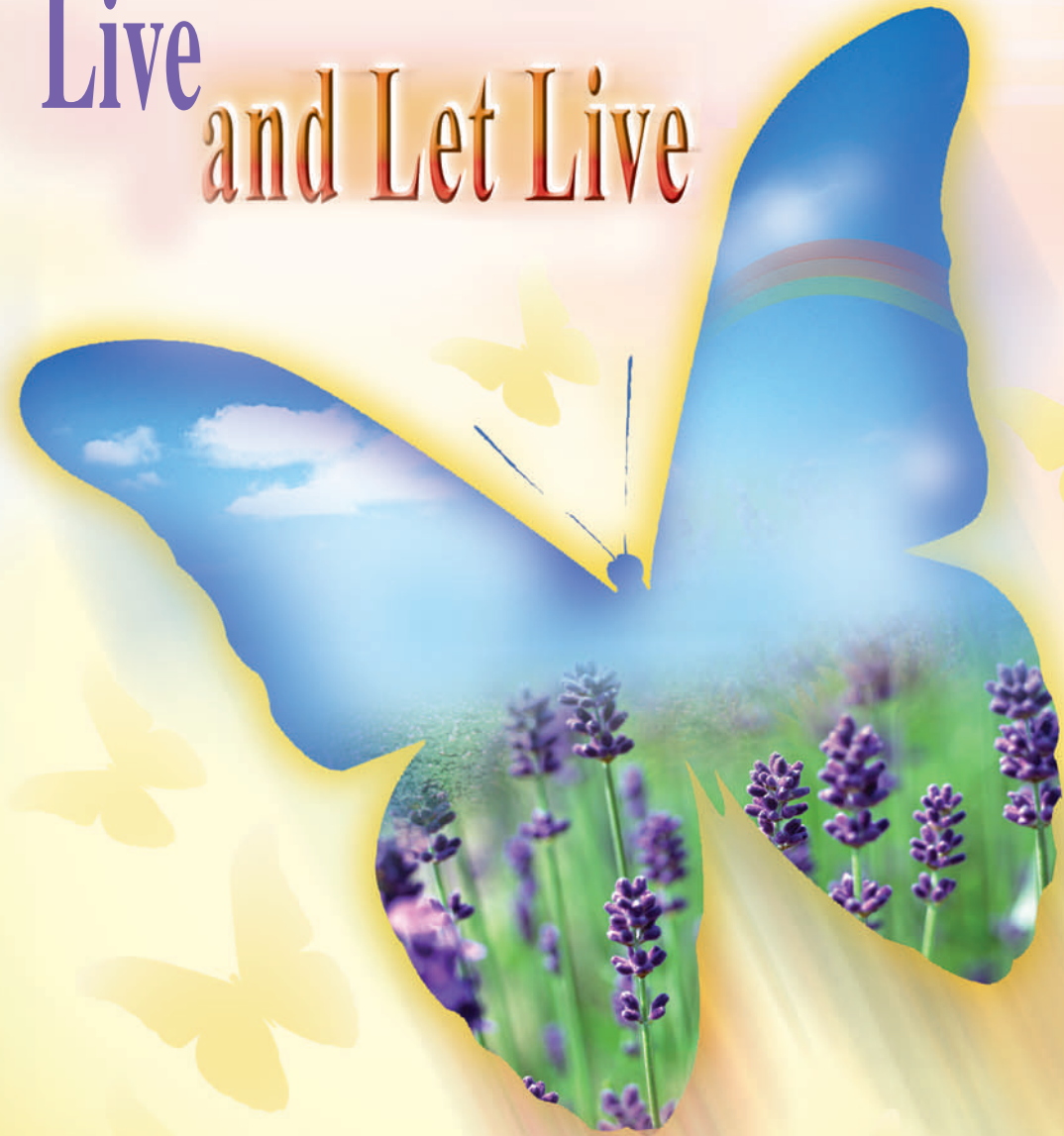


# Live and Let Live



Department of Health Hong Kong  
8 / 2003

Nursing Team  
Special Preventive Programme

Live and Let Live

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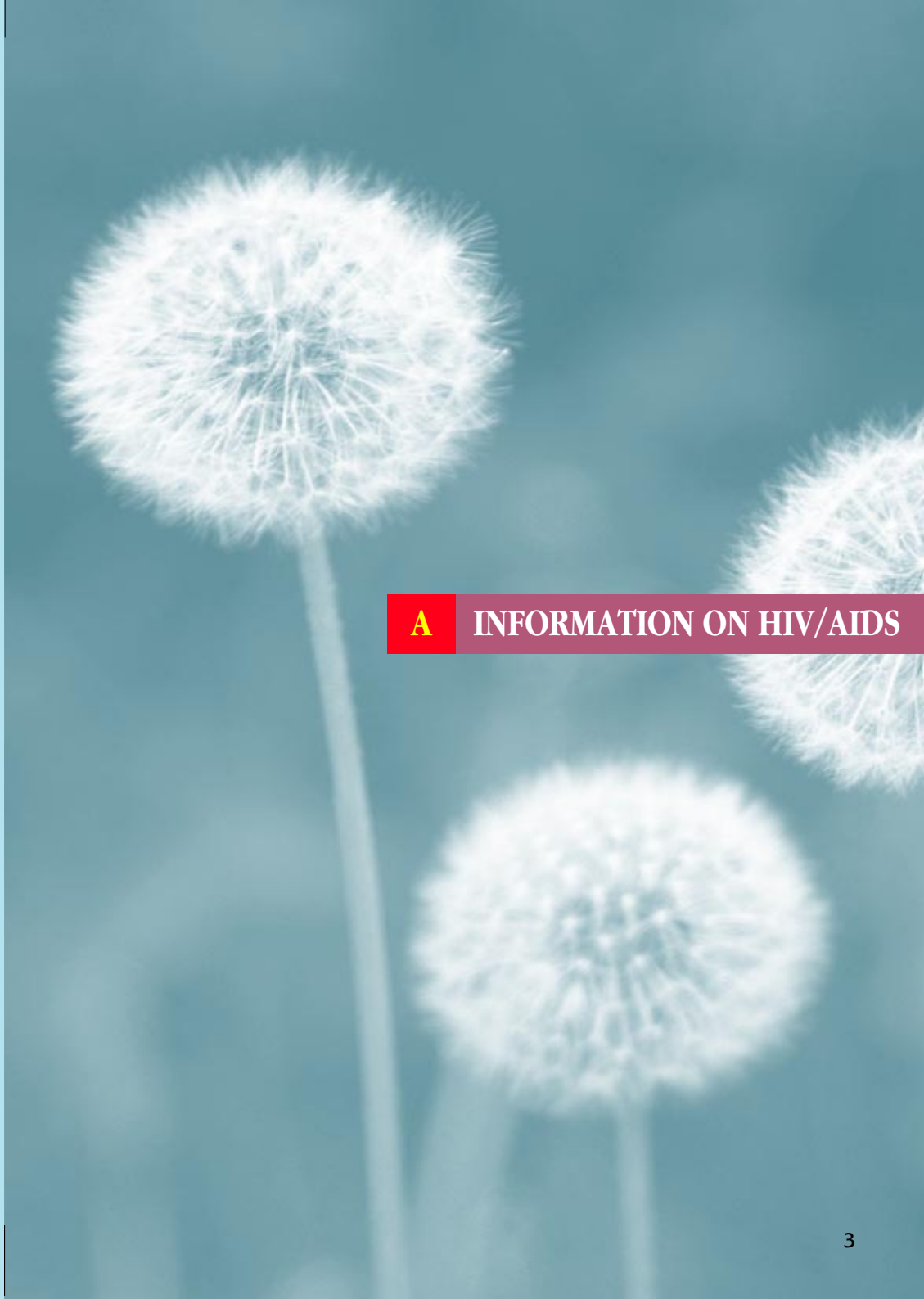
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## Preface

It's common to feel afraid, lonely and depressed after knowing that you have tested positive on HIV antibody test. This booklet aims to help in answering some of your questions and introducing some supportive services to lower your above feelings. Also, we hope to help your partner, family members and friends to have better understanding of your feelings and situation.

Remember, living with HIV means taking charge of your life!  
You are not alone and we care!



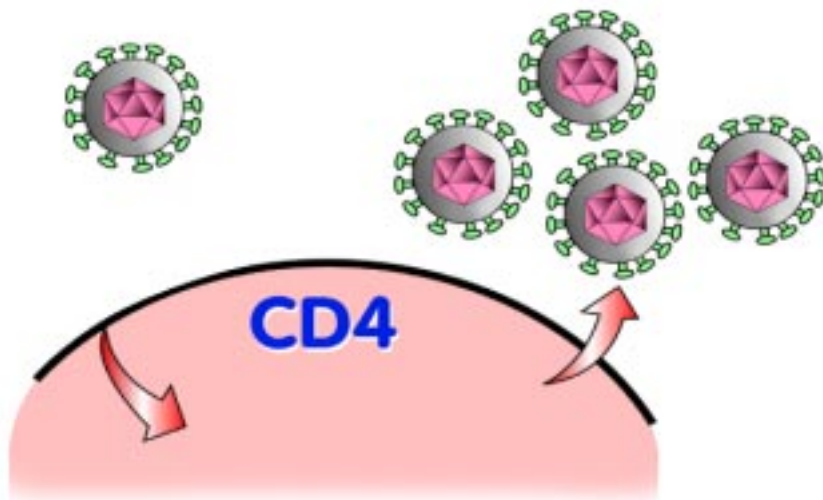


**A** INFORMATION ON HIV/AIDS



## What is HIV?

HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. It's a virus which attacks your immune system particularly targeting and killing CD4-cells causing the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).

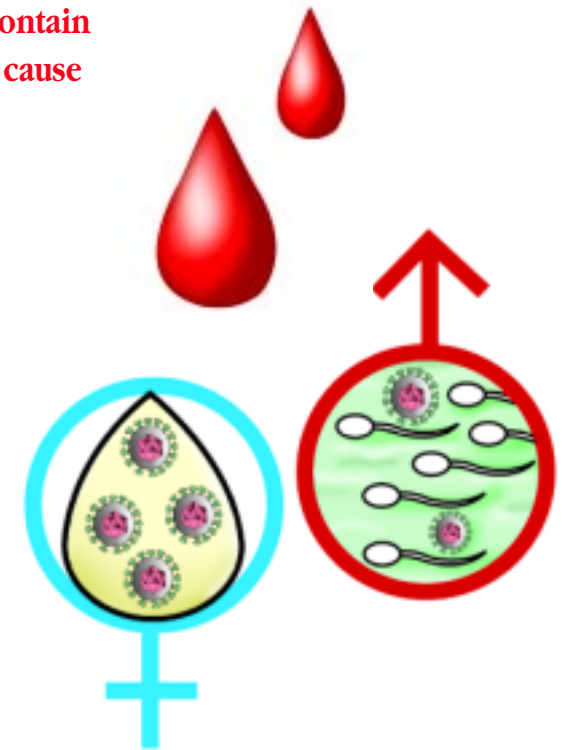


**| AIDS |** Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

## What is the transmission media?

**Body fluid that contain sufficient HIV to cause infection**

- Blood
- Seminal fluid
- Vaginal fluid





## How did I get infected?



### Sexual contact

- Vaginal
- Oral
- Anal

### Blood contact

Sharing needles and syringes



Exposure to contaminated blood or blood products



### Mother to child

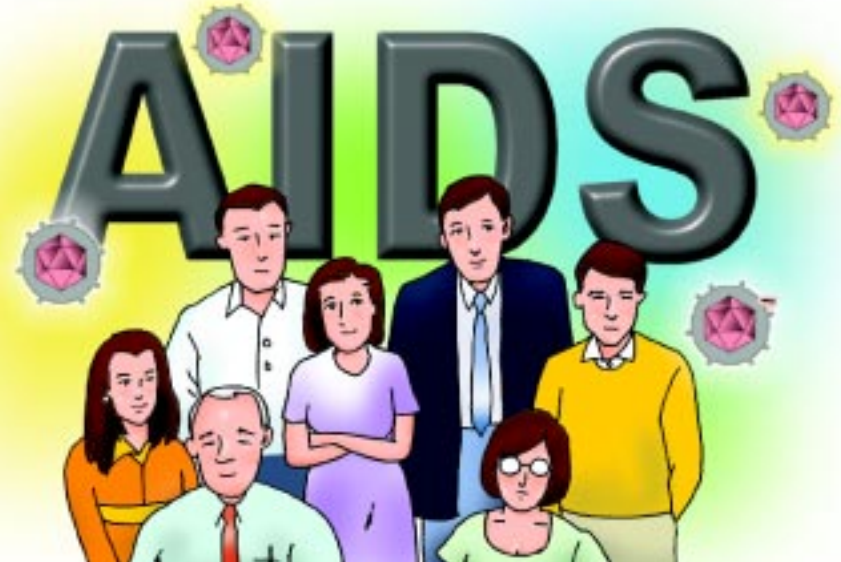
- In utero
- During delivery
- Breast-feeding



Researchers have found that HIV is not spread through casual contact

## What is the meaning of being positive?

- You have been infected with HIV
- You can potentially infect others if you do not take precautions
- 50% of HIV-infected adults will progress to AIDS in 10 years' time if without treatment





**B**

**TREATMENT**

## How does HIV affect my health ?

### Stages of HIV infection

#### Stage I: Asymptomatic illness

Where people remain well for a number of years (no symptoms)



#### Stage II: Symptomatic illness

When people experience mild symptoms such as lack of energy, night sweat, fever, unexplained weight loss and tiredness



#### Stage III: Advanced illness

Experience more severe symptoms or opportunistic infections



## Watch-out for Opportunistic Infections

### The most common infections are

#### Brain

- Toxoplasmosis (toxoplasmosis)
- Cryptococcal Meningitis



#### Eyes

- Cytomegalovirus (CMV) retinitis



#### Lungs

- Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP)
- Tuberculosis (TB)



#### Gut

- Cytomegalovirus (CMV)
- Cryptosporidiosis



#### Skin

- Herpes Simplex
- Shingles
- Molluscum Contagiosum



#### Systemic

- Mycobacterium avium intracellulare
- Penicillium marneffei

#### Mouth and Throat

- Candidiasis (thrush)



### Fighting infections

1. Regular check-ups, take medicines as directed
2. Take medicines to prevent some infections, e.g. PCP
3. Increase your body resistance against disease, e.g. healthy life style
4. Report symptoms of infection early
  - diarrhoea
  - cough
  - tiredness
  - fever
  - weight loss
  - blurred vision

## How to monitor the health status?

### Health monitoring blood test

#### 1. CD4 cell count

To reflect your immune system

#### 2. Viral load measurement

To show how much HIV is in your blood

- Results of these blood tests guide the indication and changing of treatment plan

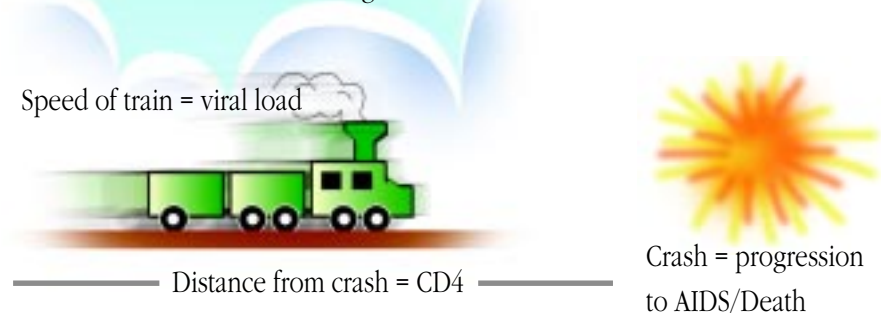


## What is Viral Load?

Viral load is the amount of HIV in the blood

**Thinking about it in another way:**

HIV infection like a train heading for a crash



### In general

- Among people with the same CD4 count, those with higher viral load tend to develop Opportunistic Infections more quickly, i.e. faster disease progression
- Among people with the same viral load, those with lower CD4 count tend to develop Opportunistic Infections more quickly
- People with high viral load are likely to be more infectious

### What is undetectable viral load?

- The level is below the limits of detection of current testing method
- Undetectable viral load  $\neq$  HIV has disappeared entirely
- Lower risk of developing resistance to drugs
- Lower risk of developing AIDS



## Warning signs

### Nervous System / Vision

- Headache
- Floaters
- Distorted / blurred vision
- Short-term memory loss

### Systemic

- Fever
- Fatigue
- Loss of appetite
- Night sweats
- Weight loss



### Oral / Gut

- Nausea / vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhoea
- White spots or unusual blemishes in the mouth



### Skin

- Rash
- Herpes Zoster



### Lung

- Cough
- Productive cough
- Chest pain
- Difficulty in breathing / shortness of breath



### Others

- Loin pain

## What treatments are available in Hong Kong?

### There are four classes of anti-retroviral drugs

1. Nucleoside Analogues (NRTI)
2. Non-Nucleoside Analogues (NNRTI)
3. Nucleotide Analogues (NTRTI)
4. Protease Inhibitor (PI)



### Effects of anti-retroviral therapy

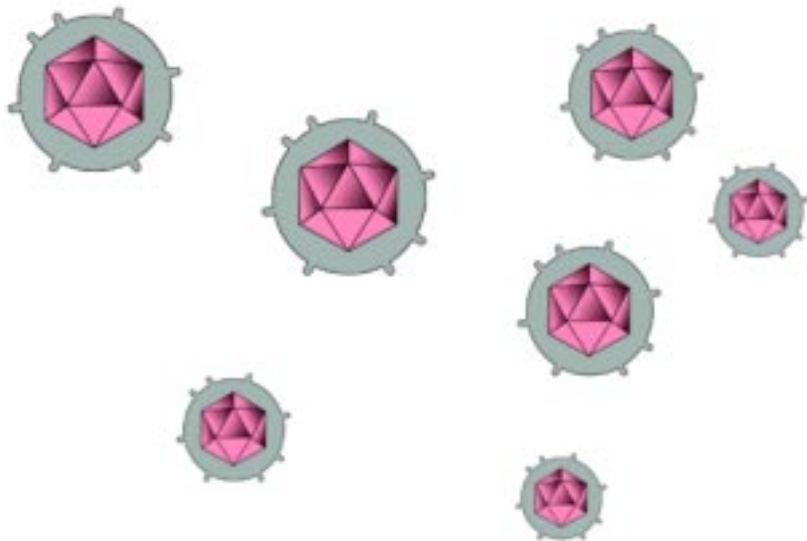
- Suppress HIV replication
- Boost the immune system
- Delay disease progression



## When to consider Anti-Retroviral Therapy?

### When :

- CD4 in a low level
- Viral load in a high level
- Signs of Opportunistic Infection /AIDS arose
- Psychologically prepared to comply with this long term treatment



## Further information on Drug Therapy

- Long term treatment



- Follow your treatment plan exactly to prevent HIV from becoming resistant to your medication



- Follow the instruction e.g. empty stomach

- Regular follow up to check the body response to drug therapy



## Things to remember on Drug Therapy

- Take on full stomach or empty stomach
- Take at least 1.5 Litre of fluid daily
- Tell the health care provider about any other over-the-counter or prescribed medicines you are taking to prevent drug interaction
- Proper storage of drugs



Follow advices given by health care providers

## Common side effects of Drugs

Usually happen in the first few weeks after commencing drug therapy

Watch-out for common symptoms

- Nausea / vomiting
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Rashes
- Diarrhoea



Remember to report to your health care providers if happened

## Follow up schedule

### New case

- Counselling by nurse
- Medical assessment including blood taking for CD4 and viral load count



### Subsequent follow up

- Blood taking - regular monitoring of CD4 and viral load
- Counselling by nurse
- Medical social worker for self-help and community support
- Secondary referral if needed

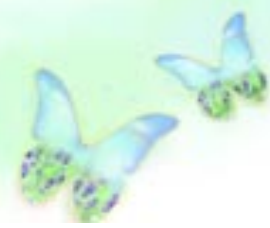




## What about my future?

It's common to feel afraid, angry, lonely and depressed

- Talk about your feelings with people you trust
- Build a good relationship with your health care providers
- Learn more about your health and treatment plan



## Should I tell others?

- Think first!
- Do you know your disease progress and medical treatment?
- Who needs to know?
- Discuss with nurse counsellor whether it is good for you to tell them at that moment



## Take steps to stay healthy and enjoy life

- Maintain balanced diet
- Have adequate rest
- Maintain regular exercise
- Follow up regularly
- Adhere to treatment
- Avoid using alcohol, tobacco and other drugs
- Reduce stress



## How to face my partner?

- Should I tell him / her?
- What will he / she react?
- How to protect him / her?
- Any future plan?
- Discuss with nurse counsellor or medical social worker



You are welcome to talk with health care providers



## What about sex?

### Practise safer sex:

- Use condom
- Sex that does not involve penetration  
e.g. massage, hugging
- Even if your partner also has HIV infection, condom can reduce the risk of reinfected by mutated HIV strain and other sexually transmitted infections



## Can I have babies?

### If you and your spouse want to get pregnant, you should consider the followings:

- Your health
- Possibility of transmitting HIV to your partner and baby
- Prophylaxis to reduce the chance of infecting baby
- Who is going to take care of the baby (child care)
- Discuss with your health care providers



## Any special precaution in daily living?



- Cover wound with dressing

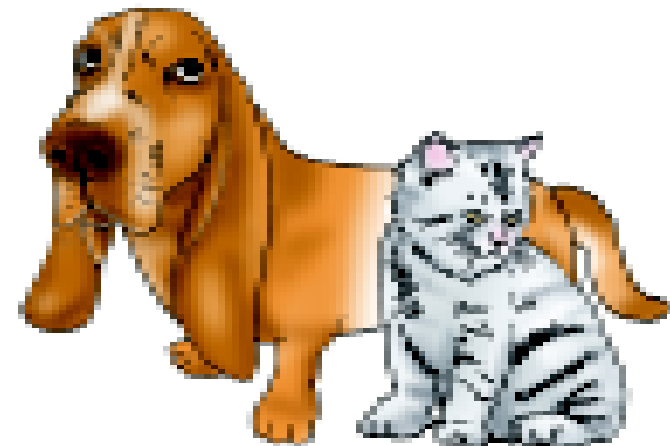
- Avoid sharing of personal items



- Blood contaminated clothing and material should be properly disinfected by using household bleach

## Can I keep pets?

- Strengthen personal hygiene, wash your hands after touching pets to reduce the risk of getting infectious disease from them
- Always keep your pets clean, wear gloves to clean up excreta from the pets
- De-worm your pets and follow the vaccination schedule if necessary





# What about travelling?

When you travel, for business or pleasure, take steps to protect yourself!



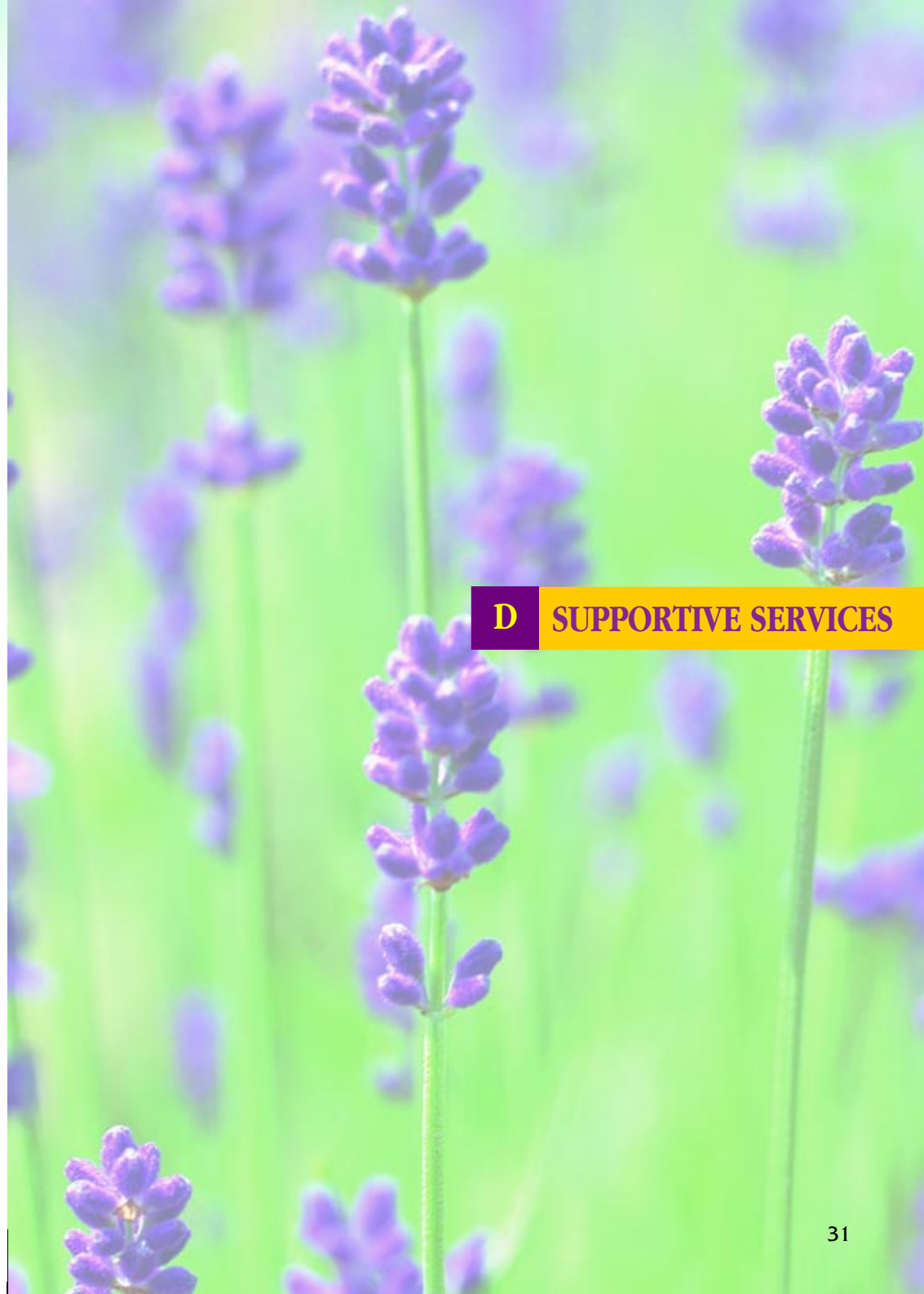
## Before you travel

- Consult Port Health Service **2961 8840** about any health risk in the area you visit and the need to get special vaccinations
- Take a supply of an insect repellent, long sleeve clothes
- Get enough supply of anti-retroviral drugs
- Discuss with the nurse counsellor if you encounter any difficulty in calculating the time difference in drug taking



## When you travel

- Take special care with food and water :
  - eat clean and cooked food, take boiled water
  - do not take raw food or drink unboiled water
- Avoid visiting hospital where TB patients are treated and crowded area
- Consult doctor if fever and malaise
- Take medications as prescribed
- Avoid swimming in water that might contain sewage or animal waste
- Practise safer sex to prevent sexually transmitted infections and resistant strain of HIV





## Talk about your feelings

### Being HIV Positive !



It's good to have someone who understands and listens



**How do you feel ? Let's have a talk !**

## Who can help?

- Doctors
- Nurses
- Medical social workers
- AIDS Non-government organizations
- Support group





## Services of our clinic

- Confidentiality
- Medical treatment
- Health monitoring
- Counselling service
- Telephone counselling



### Other support services

- Medical social service
- Health education resources
- Peer support group



## Remember, you're not alone!

For more support and information

### Integrated Treatment Centre

- |                         |           |
|-------------------------|-----------|
| • Nurse counsellor      | 2117 0333 |
| • Medical social worker | 2116 2878 |
| • AIDS Hotline          | 2780 2211 |

### AIDS Non-Government Organizations

- |                             |           |
|-----------------------------|-----------|
| • AIDS Concern              | 2898 4411 |
| • Hong Kong AIDS Foundation | 2560 8528 |
| • The Society for AIDS Care | 2559 2006 |



The background of the slide is a dense field of small, light pink and white flowers, possibly a type of clover or similar wildflower, with green stems and leaves visible. The flowers are in various stages of bloom, creating a textured and vibrant pattern.

**E** DIETARY ADVICES



# Food Hygiene

Boil it, cook it, peel it, or forget it

## Do

- Boiled water
- Cook food properly
- Reheat leftovers thoroughly
- All fruit should be peeled
- Wash hands thoroughly before handling food and eating



## Don't

- Unboiled water
- Beverages with ice made by unboiled water
- Raw eggs
- Raw meat & poultry
- Raw shellfish, oysters
- Sushi, sashimi
- Cut open fruit
- Unclean utensils and contaminated food



# Healthy Eating

- **Fats, Oils & Sweets**  
use sparingly

- **Milk , Yogurt & Cheese Group**  
2 - 3 servings

- **Vegetables Group**  
3 - 5 servings

- **Meat, Poultry, Fish, & Eggs**  
2 - 3 servings

- **Fruit Group**  
2 - 4 servings

- **Bread, Cereal, Rice, & Pasta Group**  
6 - 11 servings

