

Summer 2020

John Does the Pozhet Retreat

At the end of 2019 I was really fortunate to join the Pozhet retreat in Berry as one of the Pozhet support staff. The retreat runs every year and is an opportunity for heterosexual people living with HIV to come together in a safe, non-judgemental space and meet other people also living with HIV, as well as their partners and families. It really was an amazing weekend to see so many people from different walks of life coming together and meeting one another.

We were lucky enough this year to have the entire Berry Sport and Recreation Centre to ourselves, and the amazing green countryside of Berry was the perfect location for everyone to switch off from the hustle and bustle of daily life. Most of the weekend was spent doing fun activities, including canoeing, archery and a high ropes obstacle course. There was plenty of time for everyone to just relax and chat casually with each other.

There was a Q&A on Saturday afternoon where people could ask questions they had about living with HIV, treatments, and telling family and new partners. The best part was that it was mostly the other participants that gave their insights rather than the facilitators.

By the end of the weekend we all felt like one, big family. Everyone commented that the best part about the retreat was that HIV was not the focus – people could chat with each other about HIV if they wanted to, but it wasn't something people had to worry about. in the back of their minds. As one person said, "I don't have to make up a story when I say I have to take my meds." As a health worker it was great to see everyone connect with each other, to see people feel the burden of stigma and shame lift, and for people to find others just like them – happy and healthy and living with HIV.

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Pozhet had 27 people at the Berry retreat which included Susan and John from Pozhet and two social workers from community HIV teams: Danny and Leo. It was a great group of people from different backgrounds and ages, which included nine people who were completely new to Pozhet. All participants provided thoughtful and positive feedback about the weekend. As one of the new people stated:

"I walked in not knowing anyone and walked out making lifelong friends.....I drove back home in tears not wanting to leave but also because I felt for the first time I found people who never judged me, defined me by an illness and people I could be so comfortable with and I didn't need to be scared to talk about my HIV to."

If you would like to read more comments about the October 2019 retreat go to the Pozhet website: www.pozhet.org.au

Healthy Eating on a Budget

By **Grace Nell** (Dietician at Positive Central)

It's often thought by many that healthy eating will cost you an arm and a leg – but this isn't necessarily true! Sure, if you only shop in the health food aisle for goji berries, activated almonds and other so-called “superfoods” (which is completely unnecessary), the bill may be expensive but healthy eating on a budget can be easily achieved with a little bit of planning and savvy shopping.

A dietitian's top tips for healthy eating on a budget:

1. Plan your meals, write a shopping list and stick to it.
2. Base your meals on a staple like wholegrain bread, rice, pasta, noodles or legumes, add a source of protein like tinned tuna, eggs, beans or meat, with plenty of veggies – fresh, frozen or canned.
3. The canned aisle is your friend! Stock up on canned tomatoes, lentils, chickpeas, beans, fish – these are great to bulk out your meals with protein and fibre and are very cheap.
4. Avoid shopping on an empty stomach to avoid “**impulse buys**” that tend to sneak in to the trolley.
5. Shop the perimeter of the supermarket first and spend most of your time in the produce section – avoid overspending on processed foods like cakes, biscuits, lollies and soft drink.
6. When comparing products, look at “**price per kilo**” rather than “**price per packet**” to determine the best value.
7. Love your leftovers! Cook in bulk and make extra portions to keep in the fridge (up to 3 days) or freezer (up to 3 months) for another meal.

Easy Vegetable Frittata

Serves 4

Ingredients

- 1 onion, chopped finely
- 2 handfuls baby spinach
- 1 zucchini, grated
- 1 cup mushrooms, sliced
- 6 eggs
- ½ cup skim milk
- ½ cup grated low fat cheese
- ½ teaspoon dried parsley

Method

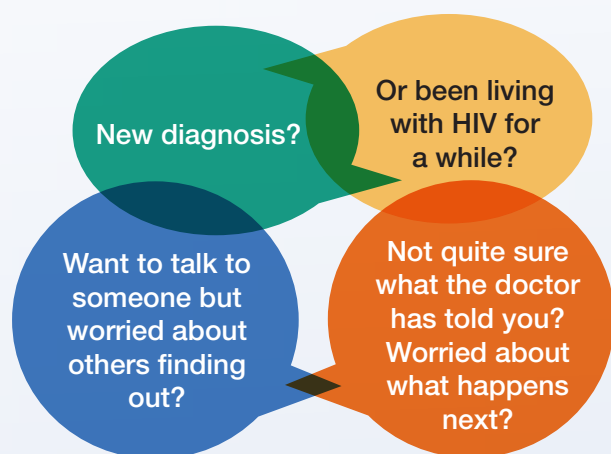
1. Spray large fry pan with cooking oil spray, cook onion, zucchinis and capsicum until soft.
2. Beat eggs, milk and pepper in a bowl.
3. Pour egg mixture over vegetables in pan.
4. Sprinkle with parsley and cheese.
5. Cover pan with lid and simmer until firm. If you would like to brown the top, place pan under grill.



TIP

Use any leftover vegetables in this recipe. Frozen veggies work fine too.

Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS): Can we help?



The MHAHS offers support to people of non-Anglo background ('CALD'), who have been diagnosed with HIV. We can put you in touch with a Cultural Support Worker (CSW) who speaks your language, understands your culture - AND understands about HIV. They understand about the worries you may have, and will listen to how you feel.

Our service is confidential and free. Our support workers will not talk about you to anyone, without your permission. You can meet them at a time and place that suits you. You can also ask for a support worker who is not from your culture.

The Cultural Support Workers can accompany you to clinic appointments. They also know how systems work, for example Centrelink, Immigration, Housing, legal services, and can help you to navigate these.

Here are some examples of how we have helped people who are living with HIV:

- **Nina** was very worried that her adult children would find out that she has HIV. She did not want them to worry about her. But she also felt very bad keeping a secret from them. She talked to our support worker about this, and eventually she decided to tell her children. Our worker and the clinic helped her. They all had a meeting with her family, and the clinic and our CSW helped them to understand that Mum would be fine, and treatment is good. Our client felt great relief, and her children support her.
- **Oscar** was worried about how he could afford HIV medication. He studies at an English college and also works a long way from the clinic. His support worker arranged for him to change his treatment to a clinic that is easier to travel to. They also talked with the doctor so that Oscar could have free medication as part of a research trial.

Would you like some support? Contact us on **9515 1234**. You can call us yourself (ask to speak to a Social Worker), or you can be referred by your doctor, nurse or support worker. We will meet with you to find out what you need, and will link you to a Cultural Support Worker if you wish.

For more information in your language, visit www.mhahs.org.au

HIV: What you need to know

The Multicultural HIV and Hepatitis Service (MHAHS) recently launched a new multilingual HIV resource: HIV. What you need to know.

Available in eight languages – English, Arabic, Chinese (Simplified), Indonesian, Portuguese, Spanish, Thai and Vietnamese - this free booklet provides priority culturally and linguistically diverse communities with all the most up-to-date information on HIV prevention, testing and treatment in NSW.

Developed in consultation with communities, the booklet is for anyone interested in finding out about HIV, with a particular focus on those at risk and people recently diagnosed with HIV.

Multilingual Booklet

For free hard copies of the multilingual booklet please email to info@mhahs.org.au

The booklet can also be downloaded from the MHAHS website www.mhahs.org.au

Pozhet News

Future activities for 2020

Many of you are aware that we did not hold the Annual Workshop in 2019. We are currently reviewing what Pozhet does (including the Workshop) so we can best meet the needs of heterosexuals living with HIV, and those at risk of HIV, across NSW in a fair and equitable way. We will be consulting services and consumers across NSW.

As a small service we work with partner services across NSW to ensure we can provide a variety of programs and activities. Keep an eye on our website and look out for emails for dates of upcoming events.

How to become more involved with Pozhet:

- Join the Pozhet Consumer Reference Group: Everyone on the Pozhet mailing list will receive information about how to apply
- Write stories or articles for the Pozhet website or newsletter
- Join the Pozhet Secret Facebook Group and play a key role in supporting others in this group



John and Colin of the Pozhet Consumer Group on the stall at RPA Hospital for World AIDS Day.

Pozhet Consumer Group in 2020

If you are interested in being in the Pozhet Consumer Reference Group please contact us at pozhet@pozhet.org.au

Pozhet has a new refreshed website

Keep an eye on the Pozhet website for new resources, news and events. It has been redesigned and looks great. See the website at www.pozhet.org.au

