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Women Like Us – Aging Positively

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About Women Like Us – Aging Positively

Women Like Us – Aging Positively focuses on increasing overall health and wellness among women aging with HIV by increasing social connectedness and access to relevant health information. This program aims to expand access to health information that centers the needs of women aging with HIV, improve patient-provider interactions and relationships, and decrease isolation. It also works to provide opportunities for women to connect with each other through The Well Project's network, build health literacy, and expand leadership and capacity building among women aging with HIV.

Women Like Us – Aging Positively ensures that The Well Project's vision – of a world in which women living with or vulnerable to HIV have the information, support, and tools they need to advocate for their health and well-being, and live free from stigma – is inclusive of women aging with HIV.

We encourage you to check this page regularly for programming updates, including interactive online

discussions about aging among women living with HIV, a private Facebook group, and educational resources for women aging with HIV, including talking points to help guide discussions with providers. All coming soon!

[Sign up to receive our newsletters](#)

Articles and Conference Coverage

[Listening to Older Women Across the Globe: An Overview of AIDS 2024](#)

"[M]y takeaways from the Silver Zone include being kind to oneself, embracing the wisdom that menopause brings, and recognizing that I am enough just as I am," writes Louise Wallace, The Well Project blogger and new community advisory board member, from on the ground at AIDS 2024.

[Sharing the Journey from Stigma to Mindfulness: A Recap from AIDS 2024](#)

Read about how The Well Project blogger Louise Wallace found mindfulness practice after her HIV diagnosis, and watch a webinar version of her presentation on the topic from AIDS 2024.

[Palm Springs Conference Centers Women Aging with HIV and Educates Providers](#)

Helmed by The Well Project's Bridgette Picou, LVN, ACLPN, The SHE is Women's Conference created a safe space for women living with HIV of all genders, providers, and allies to build community, learn skills, and have fun.

Videos and Podcasts

[HIV, Women, and Menopause: Leadership Exchange LIVE](#)

The Well Project believes in promoting not only health literacy, but also health information, and strives to fill in gaps where they exist. The October 2023 episode of *Leadership Exchange LIVE* examines menopause among women living with HIV. We talked about what it is and what it is not, and learned about some exciting research.

Our stakeholder liaison, Bridgette Picou, LVN, was joined by Sara E. Looby, PhD, CNP-BC, FAAN, Harvard Medical School Metabolism Unit and Yvonne L. Munn Center for Nursing Research; Sara H Bares, MD, FIDSA, associate professor of medicine, Division of Infectious Diseases, UNMCC; and Gina Brown, RSW, who help us navigate this topic that is often left out of research and conversations that are vital for women's physical and mental health.

[Combatting Loneliness and Isolation with HIV - Building A Village](#)

On the first *Women Like Us - Aging Positively* episode of *A Girl Like Me LIVE*, The Well Project's stakeholder liaison, Bridgette Picou, LVN, ACLPN, joined long-time The Well Project collaborator and fierce advocate, Gina Brown, RSW, to discuss the different types of loneliness, factors unique to women that can increase these feelings, and the importance of building community as we age with HIV.

Ongoing Conversations

[There's a Place on Social Media for Women Like Us](#)

As part of our program *Women Like Us – Aging Positively*, The Well Project is excited to announce a new group on Facebook. This group provides women across the gender spectrum with a space to talk about their journey, share open dialogue, and ask the questions that matter as we age with HIV.

More About Aging and HIV

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[What Health Screenings Can Help Me Age Positively?](#)

Even if you do not have symptoms or other warning signs, being on top of screenings can help catch health conditions early – and help you live your healthiest possible life.

[Special Section – Aging and HIV](#)

People are living longer lives with HIV than ever before – including younger adults who were born with HIV. People are also acquiring HIV at older ages. Check out the fact sheets, personal stories, and other resources in our special section focused on this topic.

Order Materials

[Get the Facts: Aging Positively with HIV](#)

Get key facts about aging positively with HIV at your fingertips! This pocket-sized folding pamphlet packs vital information into an attractive, readable format. The pamphlet is a helpful resource to share at conferences and community events, in clinic waiting rooms – anywhere women living with HIV are served.

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Women, Aging, and HIV

Aging can bring challenges for many women. Doing so as a woman living with HIV can add to that complexity.

We can strive to age with intention by consistently choosing to be positive about aging and life with HIV. We can remember the upside to aging, such as:

- INCREASED CONFIDENCE
- LIVED EXPERIENCE
- BETTER SENSE OF SELF-WORTH
- WISDOM
- PATIENCE

These attributes can ease the path to aging with grace and growth.

How do I age positively?

- Find folks you connect with.** Connection reduces isolation and increases our sense of safety. Community can build in person or online and can include anyone: family, friends, other women living with HIV – even pets!
- Build a wellness habit.** Surround yourself with things you love (like art or music), engage in hobbies, pamper yourself, volunteer, and address your mental and spiritual health needs.
- Try therapy.** While it may not be for everyone, therapy can contribute to your overall outlook and offer tools to navigate hard times.
- Explore complementary health therapies.** Yoga, meditation, mindfulness, acupuncture, and other practices can boost mental health.

What does vibrant aging look like?

How can you inhabit your body in a way that feels good?

- Explore body positivity and self-love.**
- Engage in physical activity** in a way that is comfortable and appropriate for you. Low-impact activities like walking, weightlifting, and swimming have health benefits for the body, brain, and bones!
- Pleasurable sex** doesn't have to stop because of HIV or aging! Sexual pleasure is good for you emotionally and physically and can lead to lower stress, better sleep, increased levels of oxytocin (the "love hormone") ... and more!

What about healthy aging for women living with HIV?

While health challenges will emerge as we age, preparing early can make a huge difference! Bone, breast/chest, and heart health are a few key considerations for women aging with HIV. Learn more about the screenings we need as we age with HIV here: bit.ly/WomenWithHealthyTests

Menopause will eventually affect all cis women (women who identify with the gender they were assigned at birth) and others with a uterus. Learn how you can prepare to discuss menopause and its side effects with your provider by visiting bit.ly/MenopauseHIV

Strong relationships with your providers are also key to aging well. Shared decision-making, self-advocacy, and following your plan of care all lead to healthier outcomes.

How can I plan for aging?

Creating an "aging plan" sooner rather than later allows you to make better decisions about where and how you wish to age.

Your plan may include:

- Care planning
 - Where? (Home or facility)
 - How much?
- Financial planning and check-ups
- Building a safe home environment
- Long-term care insurance
- Legal documents (e.g. will, power of attorney for health, finances, etc.)
- Ensuring when to involve adult protective services
- Mobility safety awareness (trip hazards, lighting, reconfiguring size of rug)

Having a plan in place (and discussing with family and friends in advance) can make the process much less stressful.

SCAN QR CODE to access resources around women aging with HIV including fact sheets, blogs, and much more!

Women Like Us
Aging Positively

SCAN QR CODE to join our private Facebook group for women aging with HIV!

thewellproject

Visit The Well Project

to access evidence-based fact sheets and other educational programming, community support, advocacy and leadership development, collaborative engagement, and women-focused research.

Join our dynamic community of women living with and vulnerable to HIV at www.thewellproject.org

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Click the image above to save as a jpeg or share online; or [download a printable pdf of this resource](#)

[Fill out this form](#) to have **free** copies of this pamphlet and other educational materials shipped to your organization or practice!

Mujeres Como Nosotras: En español

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[¿Cuáles exámenes de salud pueden ayudarme a envejecer positivamente?](#)

Incluso si no tiene ningún síntoma u otras señales de advertencia, estar al día con los chequeos médicos puede ayudarle a detectar a tiempo las enfermedades y a llevar una vida lo más sana posible.

[Conozca los hechos: Envejecer positivamente con VIH](#)

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Tenga al alcance de la mano los datos clave sobre envejecer positivamente con VIH. Este folleto de tamaño bolsillo reúne información vital en un formato atractivo y legible. El folleto es un recurso útil para compartir en conferencias y eventos comunitarios, en las salas de espera de las clínicas y en cualquier lugar en el que se atienda a mujeres viviendo con VIH.

Haga clic en la imagen de la izquierda para guardarla como jpeg o compartirla en línea; o [descargue un pdf imprimible de este recurso](#)

[Llene este formulario](#) para obtener copias **gratuitas** de este folleto y otros materiales educativos enviadas a su organización o consultorio

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