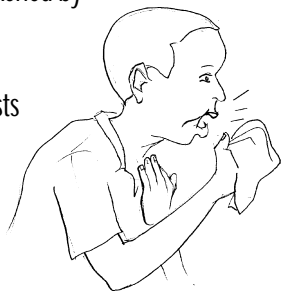


Opportunistic Infections

- Infections that attack the body when it is weak are called opportunistic infections.
- Opportunistic infections enter the body when the immune system is weak the way rain enters a house that is falling apart. Opportunistic infections cause very serious problems when a person's immune system is weakened by HIV/AIDS.
- Just as a house that is well kept lasts longer, a person who takes good care of him or her self will live longer. That is why it is important to protect yourself from opportunistic infections.



Some Signs and Symptoms of Opportunistic Infections

- Feeling dizzy
- Pain when swallowing,
- Trouble breathing
- Frequent or very bad headaches
- Problems seeing
- Feeling more and more tired
- Fever or feeling hot for more than a day
- Your sweat soaks your bed
- Shaking, chills
- Problems with balance, walking or speech
- Losing weight for no reason
- More than 4 watery or soft bowel movements a day
- Vomiting
- Sore mouth or tongue
- Stiff neck



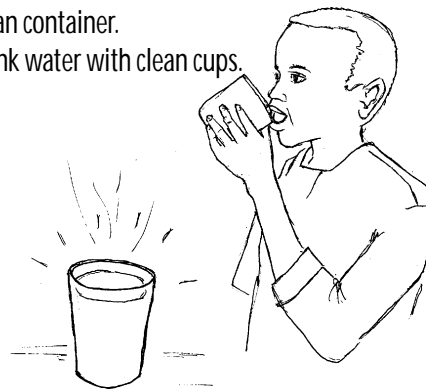
Opportunistic infections can be avoided by taking care of ones hygiene through:

- Taking baths everyday to keep your body clean
- Wearing shoes to avoid small injuries which may result in infections
- Brushing your teeth after eating
- Washing your hands with soap after going to the toilet



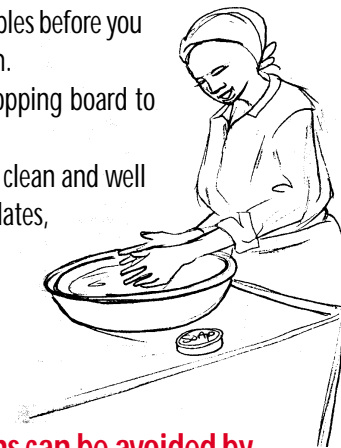
Opportunistic infections can be avoided by using and drinking clean water. Therefore:

- Draw water from recommended sources such as clean wells or running rivers.
- Use clean containers such as buckets, pots or cooking oil containers.
- Avoid contaminating the water by washing hands in it.
- Boil water until it steams hot.
- Store in a clean container.
- Draw and drink water with clean cups.



Opportunistic infections can be avoided by observing cleanliness when preparing and serving food through:

- Washing your hands with soap and plenty of clean water before you start preparing food.
- Washing fruits and vegetables before you start to cook or to eat them.
- Using a clean table or chopping board to prepare the food
- Serving food and water in clean and well dried utensils e.g. bowls, plates, spoons and glass



Opportunistic infections can be avoided by observing cleanliness when preparing and storing food:

- Ensure that meat is well cooked i.e. until it is no longer pink in the center.
- Wash eating utensils and dry them in the sun.
- Cover food or put it in a cupboard away from flies.

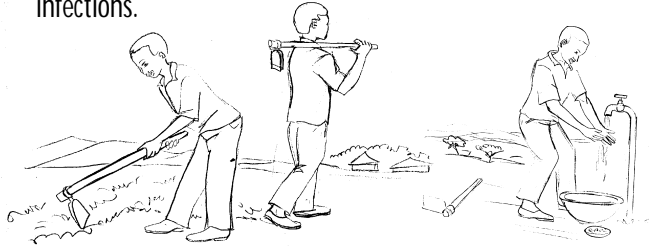


Opportunistic infections can be avoided by maintaining cleanliness around domestic and farm animals:

- Keep animals and pets outdoors.
- Ask someone else, if possible, to clean up after animals especially cats, kittens, chickens and other birds.
- Always wash your hands after handling pets and other animals.
- Avoid contact with young animals, especially animals with diarrhea

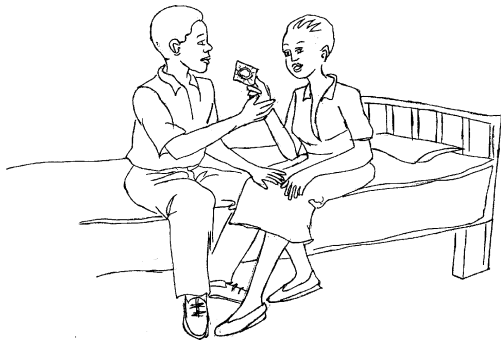
Opportunistic infections can be avoided by keeping safe outdoors through:

- Washing your hands with soap after working in the farm to get rid of germs that can cause opportunistic infections.
- Avoiding swallowing water anywhere you swim. This water may be contaminated with germs that can cause opportunistic infections.



Protect yourself from HIV re-infection

- If you have unprotected sex, you can be re-infected with a different strain of HIV even if you are HIV positive.
- ART does not protect against HIV re-infection.
- If you get re-infected again with a different strain of HIV, your immune system gets weaker.
- Protect yourself and your partner – always use a condom, or don't have sex.



Take good care of yourself

There are a number of ways of keeping your body healthy and avoiding opportunistic infections.

- Eat a balanced diet
- Do regular exercise moderately
- Get enough sleep
- Avoid smoking
- Avoid taking alcoholic drinks

Take good care of yourself

Only take medicines given to you by your doctor



Ask your doctor about medicines that can help prevent opportunistic infections.



You are not alone!

Remember, over a million people around the world take ART everyday, you too can take them successfully.

Understanding Opportunistic Infections



Infections that attack the body when it is weak are called opportunistic infections. Some opportunistic infections include recurrent boils and oral thrush.