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## Food security status among HIV-positive participants receiving food supplements or nutrition counseling in central Kenya

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**Background & Aim:** Malnourished HIV-positive individuals initiating antiretroviral treatment (ART) have increased risk of morbidity and mortality. Individuals who are food insecure may have increased risk of co-morbidities, making it difficult to gain or maintain weight. Co-morbidities with malnourishment can increase risk for opportunistic infection and cause mortality. Food supplements provided as part of a comprehensive ART care program may reduce food insecurity in resource limited settings. This study was based in Central Kenya and compared the household food security of HIV-positive participants receiving food supplements and nutrition counseling to participants receiving counseling only.

**Methods:** The FANTA III Household Food Insecurity Access Scale (HFIAS) was used to measure household food security of participants in the two groups. The Treatment Group received food supplements and nutrition counseling and the Control Group received nutrition counseling only for 24 weeks each. Household food security data were collected at baseline 24 and 48 weeks to detect how food supplements might impact food security. Data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and repeated measures ANOVA in SPSS Version 22 to observe differences among HFIAS scores across time.

**Results:** Compared to the Control Group's improvement in food security across 48 weeks, the Treatment Group's food security peaked at 24 weeks ( $p=0.026$ ), then declined by 48 weeks ( $p=0.002$ ) but did not decline to baseline.

**Conclusion:** Food supplementation can be effective in decreasing levels of food insecurity in HIV-infected populations.

### Biography

Murugi Ndirangu is an Associate Professor in the Department of Nutrition and Healthcare Management in the College of Health Sciences at Appalachian State University, USA. Her research focuses on understanding the health of vulnerable populations and the efficacy of nutrition interventions for these groups in domestic and international settings. She has experience in global nutrition, HIV, food security and immigrant health.

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