

The following perspective comes from a nurse in South Africa who is administering flax hull lignans to mal-nourished orphan children.
Report date July 2007, by Emma Fishlock (RGN)



Flax Seed Results On CD4 Counts – A nurse's perspective

When we talk of CD4 counts, these type of blood results tell us how the HIV virus has advanced. The CD4 cells help protect the immune system, the normal level for a healthy person is between 500 and 1500. So the closer the CD4 count is to these figures the less chance there is in acquiring opportunistic infections. When children are young we do not read the CD4 count but we focus on the CD4 percentage.

When Sihlangu came to us he was stunted in his growth he is four years old but the size of a two year old. He had open sores on his body, skin rashes. His motor skills were behind, socially he was not at all developed, and his vocabulary was limited. His CD4 percentage was 18, normally it is 30% for a healthy individual, so it showed advanced immunosuppression. In the last 7 months he has been with us and on the flax seed he has grown 12cm most of which was in the first 5 months and he has gained 7 pounds. He has become 100% more socially responsive and his cognitive skills have also so much improved. Although health wise he is still struggling his rashes which he was plagued with are now resolved.

For Muhle his CD4 counts are increasing each time he goes for a check, this is surprising as he has chronic lung diseases and at times can be plagued with infections. When the CD4 count starts to consistently drop it suggests that the body is no longer responding to the medication, and the interventions used to help the virus. The fact that Muhle's is increasing is fantastic news. Muhle was always fighting skin infections he never seemed to properly respond to the treatment given. In the last year I have not had to treat him for the infections which he was having so often.

Sipho has had no sicknesses in the last 9 months he has been consistently well even in the winter months when you would expect an increase in infections. Although his CD4 count shows a decrease in the last results it is believed by the doctors that if Sipho had a slight cold it would have brought his CD4 count down. They are expecting it to be back to normal when we have the next results back, because his health as been so good. He is doing extremely well at school, and is part of the local football team.

We have been using the flax seed for 18 months now and we are finding that a lot of the colds and flu which I saw at the start of the programme are not occurring. There are children which I have not seen for health complaint in the whole 18 months. In a small community where the children live 8 to a house you would expect infections to be past easily but we are not finding this. I also see that children who started the programme extremely under weight and under height for their ages have grown so much that they are catching up to the average size for their age.

I personally feel that the flax seed had aided in some of our children's physical growth. I also feel that it also helps strengthen the children's immune systems where by opportunistic infections don't plague them as much. Because of this for our HIV positive children we find that their CD4 counts are not only stable but are improving.