



Tips to Stay on an HIV Treatment Plan

Staying on an HIV treatment plan can be difficult. That is why it is important to understand some of the challenges you may face and to think of solutions to these problems before they arise.

Talk to your health care provider

- Make sure you understand why you're starting HIV treatment and why sticking to your treatment plan is important. It's important to keep taking all your medication even if you feel well!

Understand your treatment plan

- Discuss with your health care provider each HIV medication that you will take and the dose of each HIV medication in your plan. How many pills in each dose? When to take each medication? How to take each medication—with or without food?

Remembering when to take your medicines

- Some treatment plans involve taking several pills every day or before or after other medications. Making a schedule of when and how to take your medicines can be helpful. Or ask your health care provider about the availability of multiple drugs combined into one pill. Here is a list of tips to help you remember when to take your medications:
 - Take your medicine at the same time each day.
 - Match your medicine schedule to your life. Add taking your medicines to things you already do each day, like brushing your teeth or eating a meal.
 - Try a weekly or monthly pill tray with compartments for each day of the week to help you remember whether or not you took your medicine that day.
 - Set an alarm on your clock, watch, or phone for the time you take your medicines.
 - Use a calendar to check off the days you have taken your medicines.
 - Download a free app from the Internet to your computer or on your smartphone that can help remind you when it's time to take your medicines. Search for "reminder apps," and you will find many choices.
 - Ask a family member or friend to help you remember to take your medicine.

Side effects from medications

- Talk to your health care provider to understand what side effects you should expect. There are medicines or other support, like nutritional counseling to make sure you are getting important nutrients, which can help with the most common side effects. But don't give up. Work with your health care provider to find a treatment that works for you.

Being sick or depressed

- How you feel mentally and physically can affect your willingness to stick to your treatment plan. Your health care provider can recommend resources to help you address these issues.

Treatment fatigue

- Some people find that sticking to their treatment plan becomes harder over time. Every time you see your health care provider, make it a point to talk about staying on your treatment plan.

It is important for you to have a great partnership with your healthcare provider! Be sure to find someone who is a "good match" for you.

