

Side effects - HIV medicines, part 3



HIV treatment, called antiretroviral therapy or ART, is a combination of HIV medicines, called an HIV regimen. HIV medicines help people with HIV to live longer, healthier lives, but they can also cause side effects. Most side effects are mild, but a few can be serious.

Different HIV medicines can cause different side effects. People taking the same HIV medicine can have very different side effects.

Many newer HIV medicines have fewer side effects than older HIV medicines. Your health care provider will work with you to decide the best medicines to include in your HIV regimen.

If you are taking HIV medicines, tell your health care provider about any side effects. Some side effects, like headaches or occasional dizziness, may not be serious. But any swelling of the face, eyes, lips, throat, or tongue is a very serious side effect and requires immediate medical care.

Sometimes these side effects may not be related to your HIV medicine at all. Side effects may be caused by another medical condition that is not HIV, such as an infection that may be treatable. Your health care provider can tell if your side effect is being caused by your HIV medicine or if it is being caused by a different condition.



Side effects may last only a few days or weeks or go on for a much longer time. They may not begin for months or even years after starting an HIV medicine. Your health care provider may change your HIV medicines to reduce side effects. There are many HIV medicines available to include in an HIV regimen.



Do not cut down on, skip, or stop taking your HIV medicines unless your health care provider tells you to do so.

Be sure to get answers to any questions you have about HIV/AIDS. Your public health department, health care provider, and public library can help.

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