

HIV medicines and women - HIV medicines, part 7

HIV treatment, called antiretroviral therapy or ART, is a combination of HIV medicines, called an HIV regimen. ART is recommended for everyone infected with HIV.

Advice about HIV medicines from healthcare providers is mostly the same for men and women. But there are some special issues for women that can affect their HIV treatment.



Side effects

Some side effects from HIV medicines may happen more often or be more severe for women than for men.



Birth control

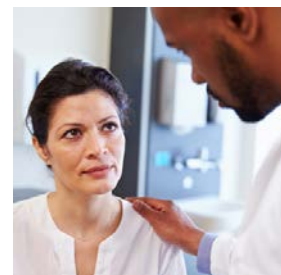
Some HIV medicines may make hormonal birth control such as birth control pills, patches, rings, or implants less effective. Women taking these HIV medicines may have to use extra birth control, or a different birth control method.

Pregnancy

Women with HIV take HIV medicines during pregnancy and childbirth to lower the risk of the mother passing HIV to their baby. It also protects the woman's health. Changes during pregnancy can affect how the body uses HIV medicines, so the dose of an HIV medicine may change during pregnancy. Some side effects from HIV medicines may make it harder to stick to an HIV regimen during pregnancy.

No HIV medicines have been clearly linked to birth defects, but some medicines have raised concerns. Pregnant women and their healthcare providers can work together to choose medicines for an HIV regimen that is safe and will work during pregnancy.

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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