

Working with your healthcare providers - Newly diagnosed with HIV, part 3



It is important to get medical care if you find out you have HIV. See a doctor with experience in treating HIV-infected patients. Most doctors who treat HIV are specialists in infectious disease. They work with a team of other health professionals who focus on HIV as a chronic, or lifelong, disease.

Your care may involve multiple providers who can treat you for a variety of different physical and mental health needs.

Treatments for HIV are not perfect, but are very effective for most people. A doctor or other health care provider can explain the best options for you. If you work closely with your health care provider in planning your care, you can deal with the disease in a way that is best for you.

Before appointments

Prepare for your appointment by writing down:

- Any questions that you have
- Any symptoms you have, such as poor sleep, trouble concentrating, feeling tired
- A list of all your medications including herbs and vitamins
- New HIV information you've heard about in the news or from friends
- Changes in your living situation, such as a job change
- You may want to ask a friend or family member to come with you and take notes.



During appointments

- Go over your lab work, and keep track of your results.
- If your doctor wants you to have some medical tests, make sure you understand what the test will check. Ask the doctor to explain it in everyday terms.
- If you feel your doctor has forgotten something, it is better to ask than to leave wondering about it.
- Be honest. Your doctor isn't there to judge you, but to advise you of treatment options based on your situation.
- Tell your doctor about your sexual or drug use history. These behaviors may put your health at risk.



Listen to what your body is telling you, and be on the alert for signs that something isn't right. Don't be afraid to call your doctor. 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.

Text is from HIV/AIDS sources from the Department of Health and Human Services and adapted by HealthReach and Healthy Roads Media. This project has been funded in whole or in part with Federal funds by the National Library of Medicine award number HHSN276201500011I awarded to the Center for Public Service Communications. Images from iStock.com.

Creation Date: March 2017