

# The basics

## Taking drugs on time



### Notes

#### What will happen if I do not take the drugs on time?

- If you miss more than one dose a month, there is an increased risk that your treatment will stop working.
- There will be more HIV in your body. This will weaken your immune system.
- Some of the new HIV will be 'resistant' to anti-HIV drugs. In other words, the drugs won't work as well.
- You may need to change the anti-HIV drugs you take. The next set of drugs may not be as easy to take and could have more side effects.

### Want to find out more?

#### For more information on this topic:

- read NAM's fact sheets 'Adherence', 'Adherence tips' and 'Late drug doses'
- read Terrence Higgins Trust's booklet 'Your Treatment', or
- speak to an adviser at THT Direct (phone: 0845 12 21 200).

For more information about HIV, NAM provides free fact sheets, information booklets, e-mail bulletins, a monthly newsletter, a comprehensive website ([aidsmap.com](http://aidsmap.com)) and a website specifically for people living with HIV ([namlife.org](http://namlife.org)).

**Contact us** by calling 020 7840 0050 or by sending an e-mail to [info@nam.org.uk](mailto:info@nam.org.uk)

**Has this resource been useful to you?** Please let us know what you think by visiting [www.aidsmap.com/feedback](http://www.aidsmap.com/feedback), by phoning us or by sending an e-mail. Your feedback helps us to improve the services we offer you.

#### NAM

Lincoln House  
1 Brixton Road  
London SW9 6DE  
**Phone:** 020 7840 0050  
**Fax:** 020 7735 5351  
**Website:** [www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)  
**E-mail:** [info@nam.org.uk](mailto:info@nam.org.uk)

#### Thanks to the following organisations that have funded this leaflet.

NHS Pan-London HIV  
Prevention Programme and  
NHS South West Essex

#### Copyright ©NAM 2009.

If you need extra copies of this fact sheet, or would like to translate, adapt or reproduce it, please contact us.

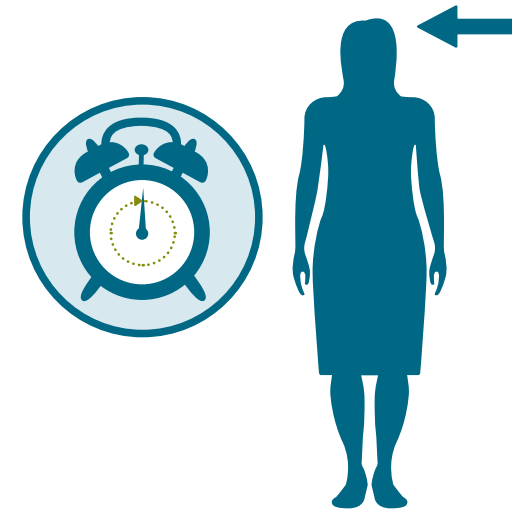
**Charity number** 1011220



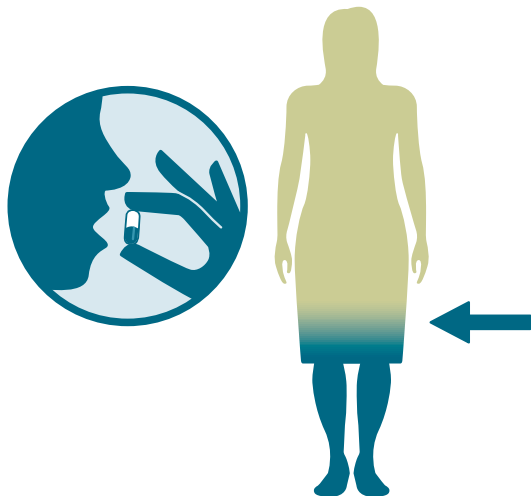
For HIV treatment to work well, you need to always take your pills at the right time, without missing any doses.



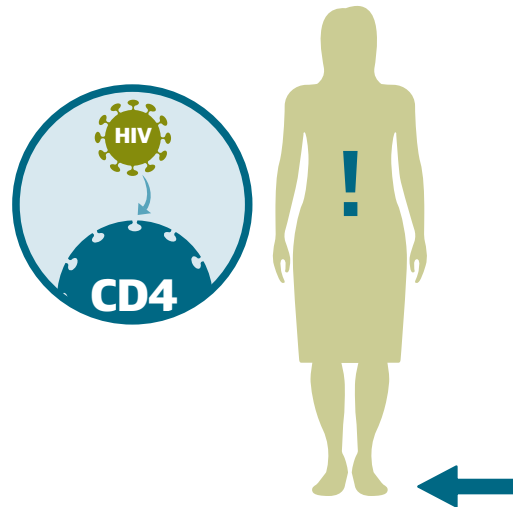
1 It's essential to take all your doses of HIV treatment at the right times and in the right amounts. For example, if you need to take your anti-HIV drugs twice a day, one dose will be powerful enough for around twelve hours.



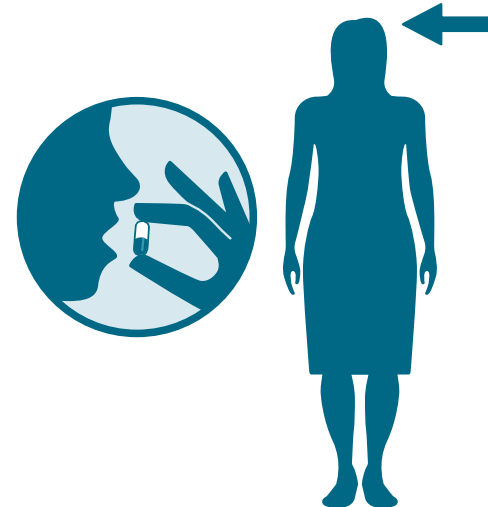
2 You need to take the next dose **before** the last one is completely out of your body.



3 If you take it **late**, that means there **won't be enough** of the drugs in your body for some time. HIV will infect new cells.



4 But if you take the dose **on time**, there will still be enough of the drugs in your body to **keep HIV under control**.



### Important points

- It's essential to take all your doses of HIV treatment at the right times and in the right amounts.
- Taking anti-HIV drugs regularly will mean that there is always enough of the drugs in your body. This will keep HIV under control.
- Not taking drugs as prescribed can result in HIV being harder to treat in the future.