

The basics

Drug resistance



NAM
77a Tradescant Road
London SW8 1XJ
Phone: 020 3242 0820
Website: www.aidsmap.com
E-mail: info@nam.org.uk
Charity number 1011220

With thanks to the staff and service users at the following organisations, for the feedback that shaped these resources: Africa Advocacy Foundation, African Culture Promotions, Community Health Action Trust, Ernest Foundation, Ffena (African Health Policy Network), HIV Health Trainers (Terrence Higgins Trust), First Point (Metro Centre), Positive Care Link, Salem Health Project, Widows and Orphans International.

Thanks to the MAC AIDS Fund for funding this leaflet.

This leaflet can be viewed in large format as a PDF.
Call NAM on 020 3242 0820.



This organisation has been certified as a producer of reliable health and social care information.
www.theinformationstandard.org



First edition 2012
Due for review in 2014
Copyright ©NAM.
If you need extra copies of this fact sheet, or would like to translate, adapt or reproduce it, please contact us.

Notes

It's possible to have drug resistance without ever taking anti-HIV drugs. This is because drug-resistant HIV can be passed on to you, for example during sex without a condom.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Want to find out more?

For more information on this topic:

- read our 'Taking drugs on time' and 'How treatment works' leaflets;
- read our 'Adherence and resistance' booklet; or
- speak to an adviser at THT Direct (phone: 0808 802 1221).

For more information about HIV

You can get free fact sheets, booklets, email bulletins and a newsletter from our website at www.aidsmap.com/resources. You can get answers to common questions at www.aidsmap.com/hiv-basics and find local services at www.aidsmap.com/e-atlas.

Contact us by calling 020 3242 0820 or by sending an email to info@nam.org.uk

Has this resource been useful to you?

Please let us know what you think by visiting our website at www.aidsmap.com/feedback, phoning us or sending an email to info@nam.org.uk. Your feedback helps us to improve the services we offer you.

You can contact us to find out more about the scientific research and information we have used to produce this leaflet.

We recommend that you discuss the information in this leaflet with a doctor or other health worker.

When HIV is 'drug resistant', some anti-HIV drugs do not work properly.

1 Every day, HIV tries to infect cells and multiply inside the body.



2 Anti-HIV drugs stop this happening. If you always take your pills at the right time and in the right amounts, there will be very little HIV in your body.



3 If you sometimes forget to take your pills, or you take them late, there will be more HIV in your body.

- HIV will then be able to infect new cells and multiply.
- The HIV may become 'drug resistant'.



4 If HIV becomes drug resistant, the anti-HIV drugs you are taking at the moment won't work properly. This means that:

- even when you take your pills, HIV will be able to infect cells and multiply; and
- there will be more and more HIV in your body.



5 If this happens you will need to change your treatment.



! The next combination of drugs you are prescribed may not be as easy to take and could have more side effects.

Important points

- It's important to always take your pills at the right time and in the right amounts. If you don't, HIV may become drug resistant.
- If HIV becomes drug resistant, some anti-HIV drugs do not work properly.
- If you have drug resistance, you may need to change the anti-HIV drugs you take.