

aidsmap
Cally Yard
439 Caledonian Road
London N7 9BG
T +44 (0) 20 3727 0123
W www.aidsmap.com
E info@nam.org.uk

Registered charity no. 1011220

Has this leaflet been useful to you? Please let us know what you think. Your feedback helps us to improve the services we offer.

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

If you need extra copies of this leaflet, or would like to translate, adapt or reproduce it, please get in touch.

For more information on this topic

- Read our 'Taking drugs on time' leaflet.
- Read our 'Taking your HIV treatment' booklet.

Other titles in The basics series

- Taking drugs on time
- Health checks
- How treatment works

For information in other languages

www.aidsmap.com/languages

For more information about HIV

- Visit our website www.aidsmap.com
- Speak to an adviser at THT Direct **0808 802 1221**

Please support us

If you would like to support our work and help us to continue to provide resources like this one, please donate today at www.aidsmap.com/donate

Thanks to all of the professionals and people with HIV who have helped us to develop this leaflet.

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

aidsmap

The basics

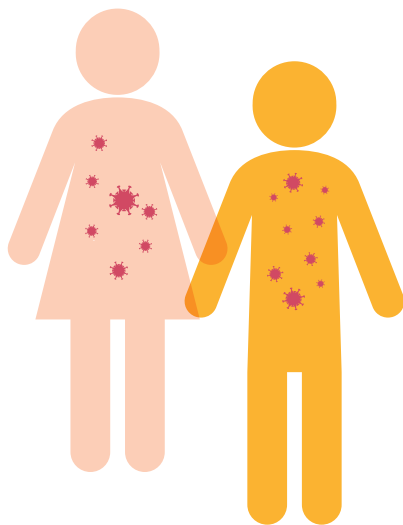
Drug resistance



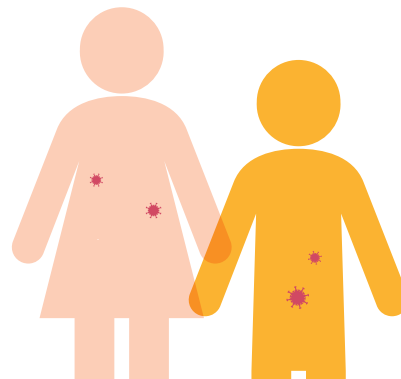
When HIV is 'drug resistant', some anti-HIV drugs do not work properly.



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

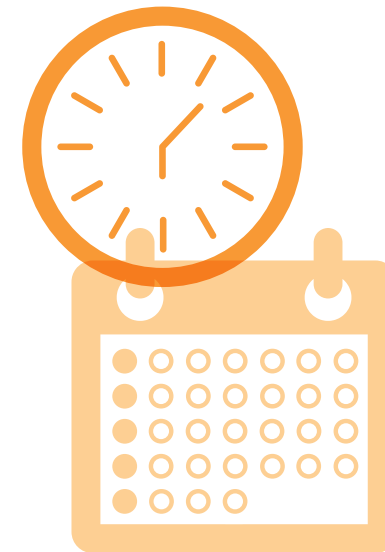


❷ Anti-HIV drugs stop this happening. If you always take your pills at the right time and in the right amounts, there will be very little HIV in your body.



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

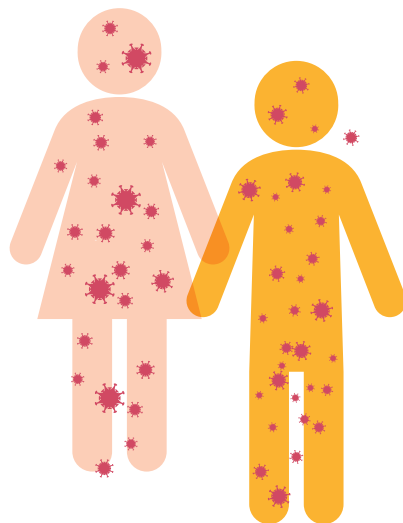
- HIV will then be able to infect new cells and multiply.
- The HIV may become 'drug resistant'.



❹ 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.



❺ 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.

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).