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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 'Side effects of HIV treatment' page
- Read our 'Anti-HIV drugs' booklet.
- 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

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

For more information about HIV

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

Please support us

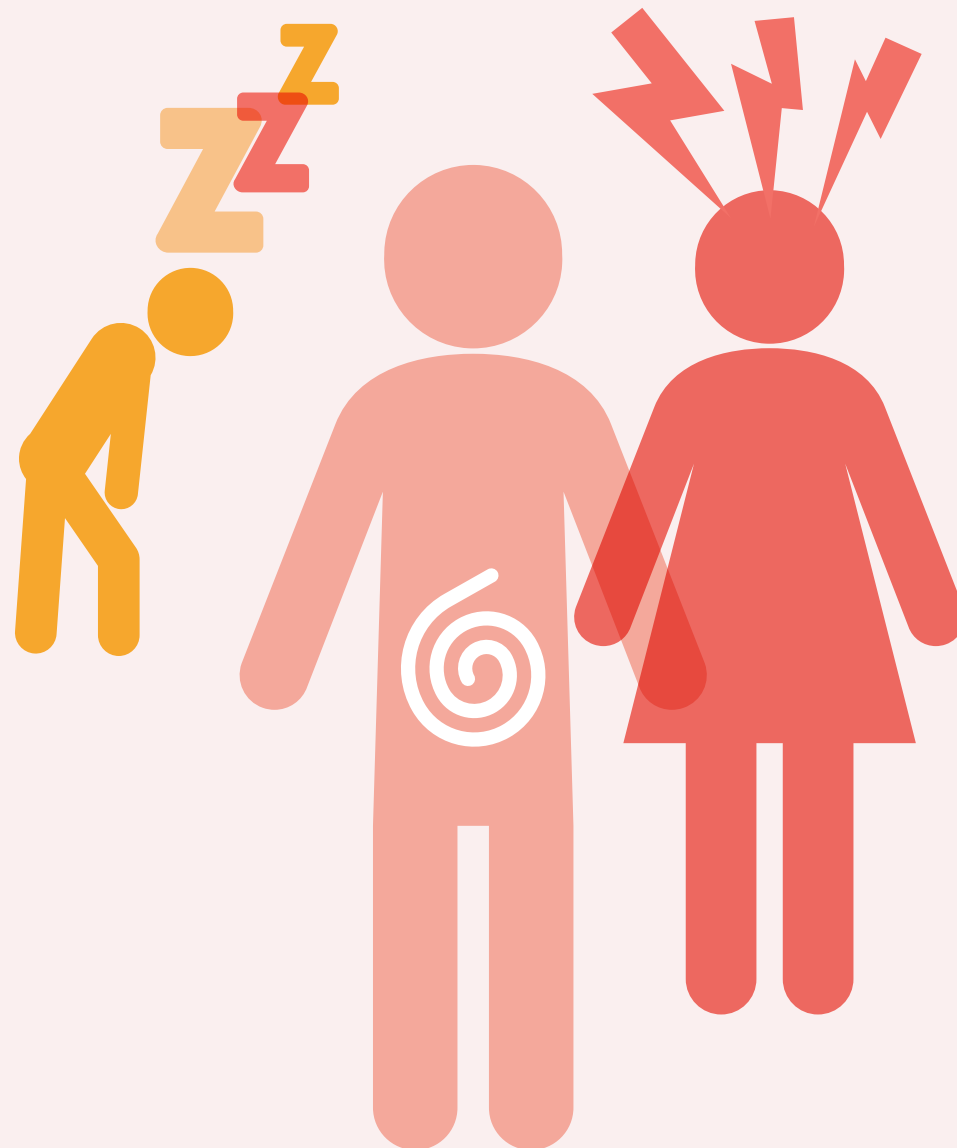
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Thanks to all of the professionals and people with HIV who have helped us to develop this leaflet.

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The basics

Side effects



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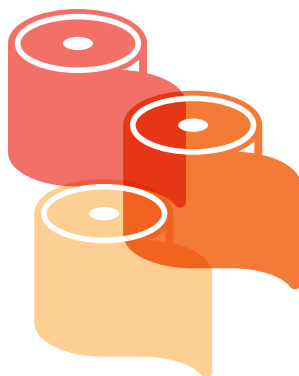
As well as keeping HIV under control, anti-HIV drugs may also affect your body in other ways. Any extra or unwanted effects are called 'side effects'.



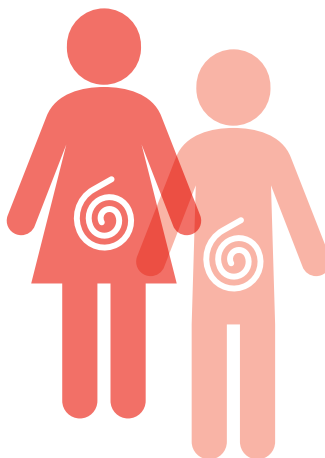
Short-term side effects

The most common side effects are the result of your body getting used to a new drug. **After a few weeks, these side effects usually go away.**

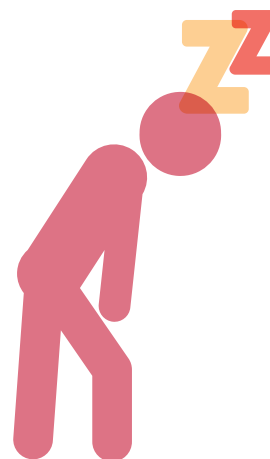
Diarrhoea



Feeling sick



Feeling tired



Disturbed sleep



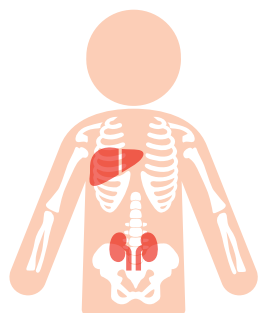
You can often take other medicines to limit these short-term side effects.

A few people find that these side effects don't go away. If this is the case, you can talk to your doctor about changing your treatment.



Long-term side effects

Side effects that have long-term consequences for your health are less common.



Make sure your clinic does regular tests on your **liver**, **kidneys** and **bones** to check that everything is OK.



There should also be tests for your **cholesterol** and **glucose** levels. Raised levels could mean you are at higher risk of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure or a stroke.



If there is a problem with long-term side effects, it may be worth making changes to your lifestyle, taking an extra medication or changing your HIV treatment.

Important points

The most common side effects are short term, and can often be managed with medicines.

Long-term side effects are less common.

If side effects are causing you problems, talk to your doctor about them. It may be possible to change your treatment.

Allergic reactions

With some anti-HIV drugs, a small number of people have an allergic reaction in the first days or weeks of taking them. In particular, this can happen with abacavir (sometimes known as *Ziagen*, and also found in *Triumeq* and abacavir/lamivudine).

The most common symptom is a rash, but your doctor will give you more detailed information about what to look out for. If you have an allergic reaction, it's essential to get medical help urgently.