

UNDERSTANDING YOUR RISK OF DRUG RESISTANCE

P[+]SITIVELY FEARLESS

When living with HIV, understanding your risk of drug resistance is important because drug resistance can stop your medication – or even an entire class of medications – from working.¹

It's important that you know your risk and have fearless conversations with your doctor about your past health and treatment history, as well as any concerns you have about getting and staying on treatment, in order to find the best way to manage your HIV together.

WHAT MAY PUT YOU AT RISK FOR HIV DRUG RESISTANCE²⁻⁶:



Previous health and treatment history, including:

- Prolonged period of time on treatment²
- Sub-optimal CD4+ cell/viral load count³
- Previous virologic failure⁴
- Baseline resistance⁵



Uncertain or sub-optimal adherence, which may be due to a variety of factors⁶:

- Lifestyle: busy work schedule, changes in routine, travel, missing meals
- Treatment challenges: pill burden, tolerability of therapy over time, refilling prescriptions
- Stigma: self, social, cultural

Treatment adherence is one of the most important factors that can reduce your risk of developing HIV drug resistance. This means taking your HIV treatment every day and exactly as prescribed. Otherwise, you're giving your HIV a chance to change or multiply which may mean HIV medication is no longer able to suppress the virus and help you stay undetectable.⁷

TREATMENT ADHERENCE INCLUDES TAKING THE RIGHT MEDICATION, AT THE RIGHT TIME, IN THE RIGHT WAY⁶:



no skipping or missing doses



taking medication at the same time each day












following prescription directions (i.e., taking with or without food)

WHAT'S MY ADHERENCE OUTLOOK?

Answering the following questions may help you watch for things that could get in the way of you taking your HIV medication the right way—every day at the same time.

HOW FREQUENTLY DO YOU (NEVER, SOMETIMES, EVERY DAY):

NEVER SOMETIMES EVERY DAY

	Follow a regular morning hygiene routine (brushing teeth, showering, etc.)	----- ----- ----- -----
	Go to bed at the same time	----- ----- ----- -----
	Set reminders for yourself (using smartphone, sticky notes, email, etc.)	----- ----- ----- -----
	Eat meals at about the same time	----- ----- ----- -----
	Have friends/family help you stick to your medication routine	----- ----- ----- -----
	Have family/social obligations (meetings, houseguests, caretaking, etc.)	----- ----- ----- -----
	Oversleep	----- ----- ----- -----
	Work late	----- ----- ----- -----
	Travel (for work or personal reasons)	----- ----- ----- -----

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN:

If you answered a few of these questions, “never” or “sometimes,” you’ve probably developed some helpful habits – but remember that even a few missed doses can interfere with how your medication works.

MY MEDICATION HISTORY (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- I've never taken daily medication before
- I've missed a prescription refill before
- I've missed doses of a medication before

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN:

Your past experience with taking medication matters. If you've checked any of these boxes, you may have an increased risk of missing your HIV medication – and you should talk to your doctor about how to reduce your risk for resistance.

MY CONCERNS ABOUT TREATMENT (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

- Affording my medication
- People finding out about my status
- Swallowing pills
- Adding more medications to my routine
- Side effects

WHAT DOES THIS MEAN:

If you've checked any of these boxes, don't worry – many others have the same concerns. However, each item you checked could mean an increased chance of missing your HIV medication, so take this chance to talk about them during your next office visit.

AND FINALLY...



How confident are YOU about your ability to take your medicine the right way, at the same time, every day?

NOT CONFIDENT SOMEWHAT CONFIDENT VERY CONFIDENT



WHAT DOES THIS MEAN?

Whatever your level of confidence is right now, building it up may help you reach your treatment goals. Be positively fearless and discuss this with your doctor.

1. Aidsmap. Drug Resistance. <http://www.aidsmap.com/resources/treatmentsdirectory/Drug-resistance/page/1280050/>. Accessed May 2018.
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3. Nakanjako D, et al. High T-cell immune activation and immune exhaustion among individuals with suboptimal CD4 recovery after 4 years of antiretroviral therapy in an African cohort. *BMC Infectious Diseases*. 2011; 11:43.
4. Colasanti J, et al. Novel predictors of poor retention following a down-referral from a hospital-based antiretroviral therapy program in South Africa. *AIDS Research and Human Retroviruses*. 32.4 (2016): 357–363. PMC. May 2018.
5. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Guidelines for the Use of Antiretroviral Agents in Adults and Adolescents Living with HIV. July 2016. <https://aidsinfo.nih.gov/guidelines/html/1/adult-and-adolescent-arv/6/drug-resistance-testing> Accessed May 2018.
6. AIDInfo. HIV Treatment Adherence. <https://aidsinfo.nih.gov/understanding-hiv-aids/fact-sheets/21/54/hiv-medication-adherence>. Accessed May 2018.
7. POZ.com. HIV Drug Resistance. <https://www.poz.com/basics/hiv-basics/hiv-drug-resistance>. Accessed May 2018.

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