

Some Questions TO ASK YOUR DOCTOR



What is my viral load?
What is my CD4 count?



Is my virus resistant to any medication?



What are my treatment options?



How should I take my medication?



Do my medications interact with any other drugs I am currently taking?
What should I expect?

It is especially important to **TAKE YOUR MEDICATION EXACTLY AS PRESCRIBED** and **GO TO YOUR MEDICAL APPOINTMENTS.**

Ask your doctor about your treatment.

If you are taking your medication and your virus IS DETECTABLE, ask your doctor why.



Understanding HIV and RESISTANCE



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Understanding HIV and RESISTANCE



A Practical Guide to What HIV Resistance Means to You

U=U

UNDETECTABLE = UNTRANSMITTABLE

Why is this so important?



The goal of treatment is undetectable.



People do not transmit HIV to partners when they are undetectable.



If you can't transmit HIV, stigma goes down and your quality of life goes up.

*If you're detectable, talk to your provider about how you get to **UNDETECTABLE**.*

WHAT HAPPENS IF HIV IS NOT WELL CONTROLLED?



The virus can become **resistant**



The body's ability to fight infection can be **reduced**



The immune system can be **damaged** and CD4 cell counts can become very low



HIV can lead to **AIDS** (**Ac**quired **I**mmuno**D**eficiency **S**ndrome)

WHY DO MY HIV MEDICATIONS CHANGE?



Detectable viral load caused by:

- Resistance
- Difficulty taking the medication



Convenience

- Easier ways to take HIV medication
- Taking fewer pills
- Other ways to take HIV drugs including infusion or injection



Side effects that do not go away

WHAT IS HIV RESISTANCE?



Resistance means a drug **does not work anymore**



Resistance testing shows us which medication works and doesn't work



When your virus is resistant, your viral load **goes up**



Your doctor should test for resistance when your viral load goes up



Some people's HIV is resistant to **most or all available medication**



Resistance **does not go away**, even if you stop taking medication

*If you changed medication multiple times, that might be because of **RESISTANCE**.*



*At your next appointment, ask your doctor if **RESISTANCE TESTS** are needed.*