



STICKING TO YOUR TREATMENT

Now that you have been taking your medication for a while, here are some more things to think about.

Taking your medication

It is important for you to continue taking your medicine the way your doctor tells you. In order for the AIDS cocktail (combination therapy) to work, enough of the medicine must build up in your body to fight HIV. If levels of the medicine get to be too low, the medicine can't fight the virus. Eventually the AIDS cocktail will not work. When that happens it is called **resistance** (to the medicine).

Other blood tests

In other Fact Sheets we talked about some of the basic tests that doctors use to help them keep track of your health. We also told you about how fat builds up in certain parts of the body because of the AIDS cocktail. One place that tends to develop more fat is the blood.

To make sure that you stay healthy, doctors use blood tests to keep track of the amount of fat. These tests look for the following fats:

- ◆ cholesterol
- ◆ triglycerides

If there is too much fat in the blood you can get heart problems. To help keep your fat levels (cholesterol or triglycerides) low, your doctor may change your medication. Your doctor may also give you medicine to help reduce the amount of fat in your blood.



Information for Inuit Community Members Fact Sheet 4 HIV/AIDS Treatment



Common questions about the AIDS cocktail (combination therapy):

Q: *What do I do if I forget to take a dose of pills?*

A: We all forget to take a dose at sometime, so don't panic. If you do miss a dose for some reason, **do not take two doses at once** to make up for it. Usually if you are only late by an hour or so you can take the dose you missed, but it is best that you check with your doctor, nurse or CHR to be sure.

If you seem to be forgetting to take your pills regularly, then it's important to tell your doctor, nurse or CHR. They can help you come up with ideas to make sure you do not forget your medicine. It is very important to take your pills regularly every day.

Q: *Can I share my pills with other people?*

A: No. Each person with HIV is taking different sets of medicine. Their doctor has figured out the best set of medicine for their body to fight HIV. Giving your medicine to them may do more harm than good.

Credits

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This is one of a series of information updates for Inuit community members to learn more about the medicines and other kinds of treatments some people with HIV/AIDS use to fight HIV and AIDS. If you have questions or want more information, talk to your doctor, nurse or CHR.

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