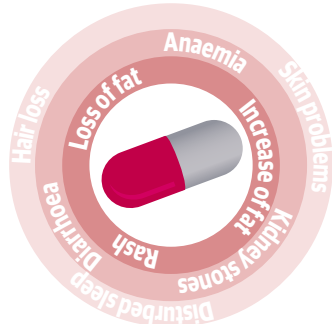


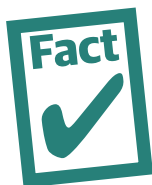
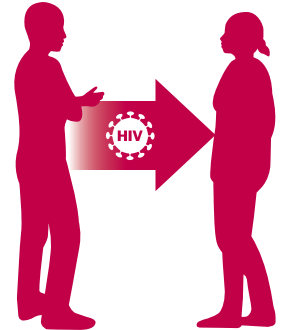
There's a lot of misunderstanding about HIV and AIDS. Not everything that you hear about HIV and AIDS is true. This factsheet will help you separate the myths from the facts.



HIV treatment has terrible side effects.

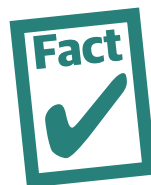


People with HIV can infect others during everyday social contact.



Today's anti-HIV drugs have fewer and less severe side effects than the drugs used in the past.

Most side effects are caused by the body getting used to a new drug and they go away after a few weeks. Severe, long-term side effects are much less common. If one drug does cause you problems, your doctor can usually give you a different drug.



HIV can only be passed on when one person's body fluids (for example blood or semen and fluids from the vagina) get inside another person's body.

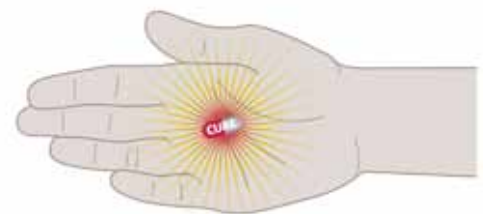
This doesn't happen when you hug or talk to someone, or when you use the same fork, cup, plate, towel or bathroom as another person. So there is no risk of HIV transmission in these situations.



You don't need to start taking anti-HIV drugs until you feel ill.



You can be cured of HIV.



Without treatment, HIV silently damages the immune system (the body's defence system). Some of the damage cannot be repaired.

It's much better to start taking treatment before the immune system is damaged - this helps prevent future illnesses. A blood test called a CD4 count tells you when it's a good idea to start taking treatment.



Despite a lot of scientific research, there is still no cure for HIV.

HIV treatment can get rid of most of the HIV in the body, but the virus never entirely disappears. It will still be present in some parts of the body, like the intestines. If you stop taking anti-HIV drugs, HIV will start spreading throughout your body.



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