

Symptoms of a greater problem?

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Understanding symptoms is critical to understanding how someone is experiencing illness. As well as affecting quality of life, particularly bothersome symptoms can impact on adherence to treatment and could be a signal of drug toxicity or some other problem.

Effectively communicating symptoms to your doctor is an important aspect of the doctor-patient relationship. But how seriously your doctor takes notice of them is another story.

Researchers across Canada recently conducted a study¹ to see whether doctors agreed with their HIV patients about the symptoms they reported at their most recent clinic visit. The results are interesting because while between 8-35% of patients claimed their symptoms were bothersome, doctors only recognised bothersome symptoms in 0.2-11% of cases.

The greatest discordance, or disagreement, appears to be in areas of memory, sexual problems, intestinal bloating, pain or gas.

The results of this and similar studies underscore an important issue for doctors and their patients.

Put simply: better communication between them is needed.

www.catie.ca [1]

1. ¹. Rachlis A, Gill J, Harris M, et al. Behaviour and attitudes in HIV (Beahiv)

- [Accessing HIV care and treatment](#)
- [symptoms, illnesses and opportunistic infections](#)

Links:

[1] <http://www.catie.ca>