

Treating HIV

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There are a wide range of drugs or treatments that can be used to control the amount of HIV in your body. They work to slow the damage caused to your immune system.

HIV treatments are known as [antivirals](#) [1]A medication or substance which is active against one or more viruses. May include anti-HIV drugs, but these are more accurately termed antiretrovirals. or [antiretrovirals](#) [2]A medication or other substance which is active against retroviruses such as HIV.. Their job is to stop the HIV [virus](#) [3]A small infective organism which is incapable of reproducing outside a host cell. from replicating, which protects your immune system from damage. There are currently six classes of antivirals. They all work in different ways against .

The six classes of drugs are:

- nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (or 'nukes' or NRTIs) – [nucleoside analogues](#) [4]A type of anti-HIV drug that works by inhibiting a stage of the HIV life cycle called reverse transcription. Non-nucleosides work in a similar way, but are chemically different., and nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors (also known as 'nukes' or NRTIs)
- non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors ('non-nukes' or NNRTIs)
- [protease inhibitors](#) [5]A type of anti-HIV drug that works by preventing the production of an enzyme, protease, that HIV needs to replicate.
- fusion inhibitors
- integrase inhibitors, and
- CCR5 entry inhibitors

Commonly used combinations include two nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors, in combination with either a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor or a protease inhibitor.

Where can you find out more?

HIV Tests and Treatments provides more information on the current antiviral drugs for the treatment and management of HIV, as well as common tests used to monitor the health of people with HIV. [Managing Side Effects](#) [6] details the side effects of HIV & antiviral treatments, and suggestions for their management.

Both booklets are available from your local AIDS Council or PLWHA organisation, or alternatively on the [AFAO](#) [7] and NAPWA websites.

You can also speak with a treatments officer at your local AIDS Council, PLWHA organisation or your doctor may be able to advise you on treatment options and the best way to manage side effects.

- [When to start](#) [8]
- [Side effects](#) [9]

[◀ Late diagnosis](#) [10][up](#) [11][When to start](#) ▶ [8]

Links:

- [1] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/123>
 [2] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/122>
 [3] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/125>
 [4] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/104>
 [5] <http://www.napwa.org.au/glossary/term/108>
 [6] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/managing-side-effects>
 [7] <http://www.afao.org.au>

[8] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/next-steps/when-to-start>

[9] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/next-steps/side-effects>

[10] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/next-steps/late-diagnosis>

[11] <http://www.napwa.org.au/resource/next-steps>