

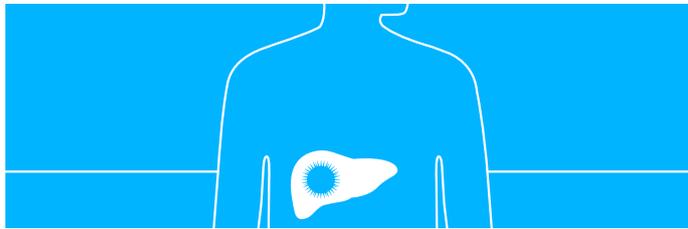
# ABOUT HIV

## Treatment for hepatitis or tuberculosis

HIV is a lifelong condition. At various times, many people find that they need to get treatment for additional medical conditions, as well as their HIV.

Treatments for HIV and additional medical conditions need to be co-ordinated, especially as the medicines for one condition can sometimes affect the medicines for the other. If you see different doctors for different conditions, they must communicate with each other.

In particular, many people living with HIV also need treatment for viral hepatitis, or for tuberculosis.



### Hepatitis

Hepatitis B and hepatitis C are two different viral infections that affect the liver.

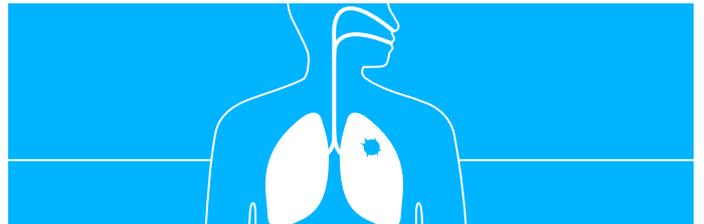
Having a healthy liver is important for everyone, especially people living with HIV. The liver is a vital organ, with many important functions including filtering unwanted substances from blood, extracting nutrients from food and manufacturing proteins and hormones. It plays a vital role in processing drugs and medicines too.

The liver can be damaged by drinking a lot of alcohol over a long period of time. It can also be damaged by the hepatitis B virus, or by the hepatitis C virus. Left untreated, hepatitis B and C are serious infections. They can lead to liver cirrhosis and liver cancer.

You can take treatment for both hepatitis and HIV at the same time. HIV treatment is safe and effective in people who have hepatitis B or C.

In fact, some of the drugs used to treat HIV are also effective against hepatitis B, lowering levels of hepatitis B virus in the body. You and your doctor should choose a combination treatment that includes drugs which act against both HIV and hepatitis B.

Treatment for hepatitis C is changing fast, although the newest treatments are not available in every country. The older treatment is usually a combination of weekly injections and daily tablets. This is effective for many people but gives some people unpleasant side-effects. The newer treatments only involve daily tablets. They are effective for almost all people and have fewer side-effects. A few months treatment for hepatitis C can get rid of this infection for ever.



### Tuberculosis

Tuberculosis (TB) is a bacterial infection that people with HIV are vulnerable to when their immune system is weakened.

The bacteria can pass from one person to another through the air. The bacteria usually infect the lungs, but they can also infect other parts of the body (such as bones and joints).

People with healthy immune systems may have the bacteria but are able to keep the infection under control. However people with weakened immune systems (for example, weakened by having HIV and not taking HIV treatment), are unable to keep the bacteria under control.

If tuberculosis is making you ill, then you will usually need to take treatment for both tuberculosis and HIV.

- Anti-tuberculosis drugs will get rid of the bacteria and cure you of tuberculosis. This treatment usually takes six months, but can take longer.
- Anti-HIV drugs will reduce your risk of being infected with tuberculosis again in the future. They will strengthen your immune system.

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**A collaboration between:** NAM aidsmap, European AIDS Treatment Group, Aids Action Europe, East Europe & Central Asia Union of PLWH and ITPCru (The Treatment Preparedness Coalition).

**For more information:** [www.about-hiv.info](http://www.about-hiv.info); [www.pro-vich.info](http://www.pro-vich.info); [www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)

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