

What is Adherence?

The word **adherence** means to stick to or stay with something. Adherence is very important when taking your HIV medications. Taking them at the right time every day, as prescribed, is important to staying healthy.

Take your medication at the same time every day.



ART: ART stands for anti-retroviral therapy, and means the same thing as HIV medications.

Taking your HIV medication on time and in the correct way will help you fight HIV. Your medication controls your viral load (which you want low) and your CD4 count (which you want high).

Adherence is

- Taking the right number of pills for the entire length of time necessary
- Taking medication at the same time every day
- Taking medication at the right number of hours apart
- Taking medication according to dietary instructions
- Following instructions about mixing your medication and other substances

Why is adherence important?

- Taking your HIV medication the right way every day is the most important thing you can do to stay healthy. This keeps the virus under control so it doesn't replicate, or multiply in your body, and damage your CD4 cells. Not taking your medication regularly could make the virus resistant to the medication; this means the medication becomes less effective in fighting the HIV virus.