

# DEALING WITH A NEW HIV DIAGNOSIS?

## Here's What YOU Need to Know...



### You can still live a normal life!

**You're not alone!** Around 1.2 million people in the US have HIV. People of any gender, sexual orientation, race or ethnicity, or age can get HIV. **The good news** is that HIV drugs are so effective that HIV is now considered a chronic disease that can be controlled if you take your medication. That way, you can live a long, healthy life. In fact, people with HIV can live just as long as people without it.

### How can I avoid transmitting HIV to someone else?

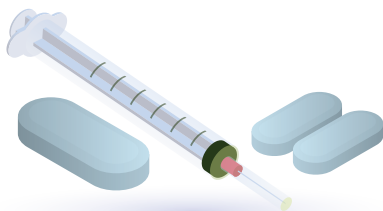
As long as you take your HIV medicine the way you are supposed to, the level of HIV in your blood (viral load) will drop so it is undetectable, meaning it can't be seen on viral load test. Once this happens, you cannot give (transmit) HIV to any sexual partner, even if you don't use a condom.

This is called undetectable=untransmittable, or U=U. This does not protect you against other sexually transmitted infections, so it's important to still use a condom with sexual partners for that reason.



Having an undetectable level of HIV in your blood reduces the risk of transmitting HIV when sharing drug injection equipment, but it doesn't guarantee that transmission won't happen. It's best to avoid sharing needles or other equipment and to visit a syringe exchange program to get unused equipment.

## What to Expect From HIV Treatment



### What are my medication options for HIV?

There are many different medications you can take to help control your HIV. There are pill options, where you take 1 or 2 pills once a day. You may also be able to get a shot at your doctor's office once every 2 months, but this is something to discuss with your doctor.

### When can I start taking HIV medicine?

You can start taking pills for HIV as soon as you are diagnosed! You will need to have blood drawn for lab work when you start, but you don't even need to wait for your doctor to get results before starting your medicine.



# How can I pay for my HIV medicine and regular lab work?

## Medical Insurance

Your medical insurance can help cover the cost of your medication, office visits, and lab work. Coverage will vary based on your deductible, co-pays, and type of insurance plan.

## Medicare plans cover all HIV medications.

Although Medicaid eligibility and coverage are not the same in every state, your doctor's office can help you figure out if you can enroll in Medicaid and what the program will cover.

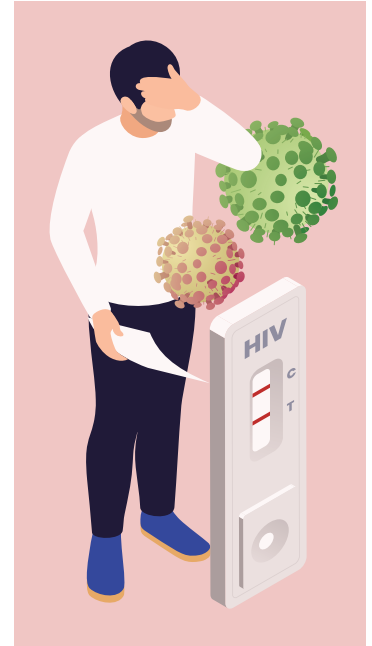
<https://www.healthcare.gov/lower-costs/>

## Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program

The Ryan White HIV/AIDS Program can help cover HIV medication and office visit costs for low-income people. <https://locator.hiv.gov/>

## Patient Assistance Programs

Pharmaceutical companies offer medications at low or no cost to patients who need help affording their medicine. <https://www.hiv.gov/hiv-basics/staying-in-hiv-care/hiv-treatment/paying-for-hiv-care-and-treatment/assistance>



There may be other programs that can help cover the cost of office visits, lab work, and your HIV medicine. **Make sure you talk to your doctor!**

## How often will I have to see my doctor?



**You will need to have the level of HIV in your blood checked every few months.**

If you are taking a pill for your HIV, you will need to see your doctor a couple of times a year, though it may be more often right after you're diagnosed. If you are getting a shot instead of a daily pill, you will have to go to your doctor's office **every 2 months.**

Want more information about  
the risk of HIV and HIV treatment?



Want more information about  
staying engaged in HIV care?

