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HIV/AIDS and the Common Cold

In this article

- Why Are Colds a Problem for People With HIV/AIDS?
- Which Cold Treatment Should I Use?
- How Can I Prevent Colds?

When you have AIDS, your body may find it hard to fight off colds. Make sure you do what you can to avoid catching one, and take good care of yourself if you do get sick.

Why Are Colds a Problem for People With HIV/AIDS?

HIV, the virus that causes AIDS, kills or damages cells in the immune system, your body's defense against germs. That makes it tougher for you to beat back infections. When you get sick with a cold, you're more likely to get complications, like [pneumonia](#).

Which Cold Treatment Should I Use?

When you first get sick, call your doctor. There aren't any medicines that can fight the virus that causes a cold, but he'll recommend treatments that can ease your symptoms.

A cold normally lasts a week and goes away on its own, even in people with HIV. But if your symptoms don't improve or you get shortness of breath or fever, let your doctor know right away, in case you need more aggressive treatment.

Make sure you drink plenty of fluids, especially if you have fever. If your temperature goes above 102 F, it could be a sign that you have the [flu](#). If your doctor says you've got it, he may suggest medicines that may make it go away more quickly. But the sooner after you get sick you take them, the better they work.

Whether you have a cold or the flu, if your appetite is down it's important to try to eat something anyway. Smaller meals may help until you get hungry again. Also, rest as much as you can and get plenty of [sleep](#) so your body has a chance to recover.

How Can I Prevent Colds?

Always use good hygiene to lower your chance of getting sick. Ask your family and friends to do their part in keeping germs away from you. Tell them to cover their mouths when they [cough](#) and wash their hands often. They should also avoid touching surfaces after rubbing their eyes or nose.

Use an antibacterial cleaner or a mild bleach solution to kill germs on common household hotspots, such as telephone receivers, doorknobs, kitchen and bathroom countertops and sinks, and the refrigerator handle. Also, keep your computer mouse and keyboard clean.

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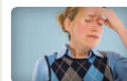
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- Serious allergic reactions (hypersensitivity reaction) that can cause death have happened with TRIUMEQ and other

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handic. Also, keep your computer mouse and keyboard clean.

Check with your doctor about vaccinations against pneumonia and the flu. The CDC recommends that people with long-term medical conditions, including HIV/AIDS, be among the first to get a [flu vaccine](#) each year.

WebMD Medical Reference

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Reviewed by [Melinda Ratini, DO, MS](#) on August 13, 2014

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Further Reading:

- [Slideshow: A Pictorial Timeline of the HIV/AIDS Pandemic](#)
- [Slideshow: Living With HIV/AIDS: Myths and Facts](#)
- [Acquired Lipodystrophy](#)
- [HIV and Infection from Pets](#)
- [HIV: Antiretroviral Therapy \(ART\)-Topic Overview](#)
- [HIV: Preventing Other Infections When You Have HIV-Topic Overview](#)
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