

Is this just to save the NHS money?

To help the NHS use its resources wisely and continue providing excellent care for everyone, your HIV team may suggest changing your current HIV medication to a similar one that works just as well but costs less. This change follows national NHS guidance and is only recommended if it is safe and effective for you. Your health always comes first, and your clinic will explain everything, answer any questions, and make sure the new treatment continues to work well for you.

Where can I find out more information?

If you want to read more about your ART, some good resources are;

<https://www.aidsmap.com/news/oct-2023/increasing-and-changing-pattern-treatment-switches-among-people-hiv>

<https://www.aidsmap.com/about-hiv/changing-hiv-treatment>

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www.MerseyWestLancs.nhs.uk

Switching antiretroviral medication

Patient information leaflet

If you need this leaflet in a different language or accessible format
please speak to a member of staff who can arrange it for you.

اگر به این بروشور به زبان دیگر یا در قالب دسترس پذیر نیاز دارید،
لطفاً با یکی از کارکنان صحبت کنید تا آن را برای شما تهیه کند.

Jeśli niniejsza ulotka ma być dostępna w innym języku lub formie,
proszę skontaktować się z członkiem personelu, który ją dla Państwa przygotowuje.

Dacă aveți nevoie de această broșură într-o altă limbă sau într-un format accesibil,
vă rog să discutați cu un membru al personalului să se ocupe
de acest lucru pentru dumneavoastră

如果您需要本传单的其他语言版本或无障碍格式，请联系工作人员为您安排。

إذا احتجت إلى هذه النشرة بلغة أخرى، أو بتنسيق
يسهل الوصول إليه، يرجى التحدث إلى أحد الموظفين لترتيب ذلك لك.

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Why am I being asked to switch my antiretroviral medication?

There are several reasons why your clinical team may suggest changing your Antiretroviral Therapy (ART).

- Make it more simple - Reducing the amount of tablets you need to take or changing to a tablet that can be taken with or without food.
- Side effects - Some ART may have possible effects on your bones, kidneys and heart health.
- Resistance - If the virus has become less sensitive to your current tablets we may need to switch.
- HIV management - If your viral load is not 'undetectable' then your ART may be switched to improve your HIV management.
- Interactions - Some ART do not get along well with other medicines known as 'Drug - Drug Interactions' (DDIs). You can always check any medicines are safe to take with your ART by using the HIV interaction checker website or app (scan the below QR code).
- Cost - Switching to cheaper ART will help to save the NHS money but will not compromise your treatment.



<https://www.hiv-druginteractions.org/checker>

Is the switch safe?

Before we offer you any switch, we will:

- Review your treatment history and lab results.
- Check for any drug resistance.
- Consider your lifestyle, preferences and any other medical conditions.
- Discuss possible side effects or interactions with the new treatment.

We will talk about the decision as a clinical team to ensure that any switch is safe. The goal of any switch is to keep your HIV well controlled, maintain your health, and improve your quality of life.

What happens if I agree to switch ART? - You will be asked to return to clinic for a blood test after 4-6 weeks, to check your viral load remains undetectable. Depending on the type of tablet you are switched to, we may check your kidney health by taking a blood and urine sample.

What should I be aware of? - It is important to take the new tablets as prescribed and not to miss any doses. Some people may experience temporary side effects while adjusting which may settle after a few days. We try to switch away from drugs that interact with other medication you may be taking. If you are prescribed another medication (or are taking any other drugs or supplements), please always check with the prescriber for interactions.

What happens if I do not like my new ART? - If you do not like the new ART you have been switched to, please speak to your clinical team. We may be able to offer you an alternative or possibly switch back to your previous regimen. Do not stop taking your ART unless advised by a doctor.