

Chapter 24 Lesson 4: Preventing and Treating HIV/AIDS

Introduction:

At this time, there is no cure for AIDS. However, various drugs exist to help patients with HIV or AIDS slow the development of the disease. Taking these drugs can help keep people with AIDS alive and healthy for as long as possible. This fact sheet from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) provides some basic information about HIV treatment.

Starting Anti-HIV Medications

http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/ContentFiles/StartingAnti-HIVMeds_FS_en.pdf

Directions

- Click on the link and read the fact sheet.
 - Then answer the following questions:
1. How does HIV make it harder for the body to fight infections?
 2. What is viral load?
 3. List three factors that a patient and doctor should consider when deciding when to start treating HIV with drugs.
 4. List two reasons people with HIV should not begin treatment as soon as they are diagnosed as HIV-positive.
 5. What is an antiretroviral drug?

Answers:

1. By destroying CD4 cells, or T cells
2. The amount of HIV in a sample of blood
3. Symptoms of advanced HIV disease, CD4 count, and viral load
4. Any two of the following:
 - Once the patient begins taking HIV drugs, he or she may need to continue taking them for the rest of his or her life.
 - Starting treatment requires a significant adjustment in the patient's lifestyle.
 - HIV medications can have negative side effects.
 - Taking medicines that do not suppress the virus completely can lead to drug resistance.
5. A medication that interferes with the replication of retroviruses, such as HIV

Additional Links to Explore:

Use the links below to gather additional information on the activity topic. When appropriate, have students extend their research to include important concepts contained in these Web sites.

Recommended HIV Treatment Regimens

http://www.aidsinfo.nih.gov/ContentFiles/RecommendedHIVTreatmentRegimens_FS_en.pdf

The HIV Life Cycle

http://aidsinfo.nih.gov/contentfiles/HIVLifeCycle_FS_en.pdf