



# "if these anti-HIV drugs are so fucking good, why do I feel like shit?"

Side effects occur for many reasons, the main one being that HIV enzymes are similar to many of the enzymes that your body needs to function normally.

For drugs to be effective against HIV, they have to be given in high enough doses to have an impact. But it is at these high doses that the drugs also start to inhibit some of your body's other enzymes - and that's usually when side effects start to appear.

Some people suffer problems like **nausea**, **tiredness**, **diarrhoea** and **rashes**, but not everyone has these side effects, and they may only last for a short period.

Before you start your treatment, discuss with your doctor the specific side effects associated with each of the anti-HIV drugs you will be taking. If you do have problems, consult your clinic straight away. There might be a very simple explanation but it's important you get it checked out.



**THE FIFTH  
OF SEVEN ADVERTS**

All information was accurate as of May 2004

Some anti-HIV drugs can have long term side effects. These can include changes in your body shape, either accumulation of fat (**lipodystrophy**) or wasting (**lipoatrophy**).

Some drugs can cause nerve damage, mainly in your hands and feet (**peripheral neuropathy**).

If you are worried about any of these side effects speak to your doctor. There are treatments available and sometimes one or more of the drugs that you are taking may need to be changed.

Be realistic about what these drugs can do for you, and to you. Weigh up the pros and cons of therapy before you start.

## Own your treatment

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[www.metromate.org.uk/oym](http://www.metromate.org.uk/oym)

### Further information:

Order the AIDS Treatment Update (ATU) and the Anti-HIV Drugs and Lipodystrophy booklets from **NAM**  
020 7840 0050  
[www.aidsmap.com](http://www.aidsmap.com)

The Information Exchange:  
020 8746 5929  
[www.hivgum.demon.co.uk](http://www.hivgum.demon.co.uk)

i-Base Treatment Information Phonenumber:  
0808 800 6013 Mon-Wed 12-4pm  
[www.i-base.info](http://www.i-base.info)

THT Direct Helpline:  
0845 1221 200  
[www.tht.org.uk](http://www.tht.org.uk)

GMFA's campaigns are designed, planned and executed by HIV positive, negative and untested volunteers. To volunteer for GMFA, phone, write or e-mail: 020 7738 6872. Unit 43, The Eurolink Centre, 49 Effra Road, London SW2 1BZ. [newvol@gmfa.org.uk](mailto:newvol@gmfa.org.uk)  
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