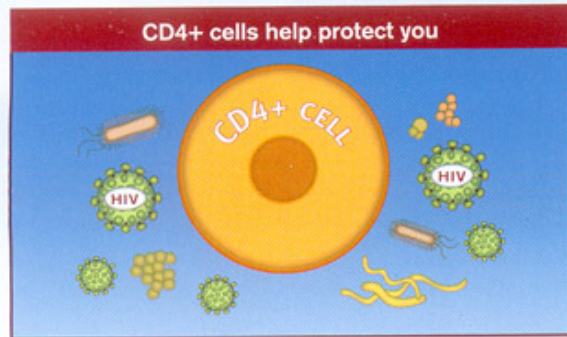
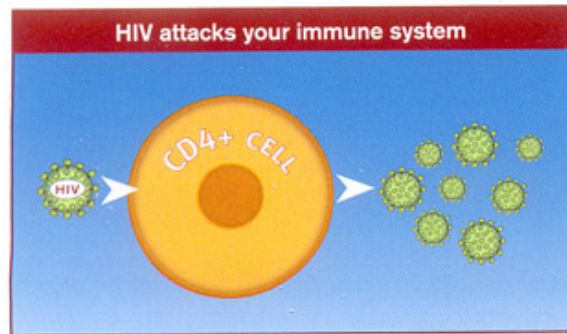


SOME THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT HIV

When you test positive for HIV, it means that you have the human immunodeficiency virus. This is a virus that attacks white blood cells called CD4+ cells (also known as T-cells).



CD4+ cells are a vital part of your immune system. They are important because they help you fight viruses and bacteria.



HIV is a virus that multiplies as fast as it can. Untreated, HIV can produce billions of new viruses every day. But HIV cannot multiply on its own; it must use healthy CD4+ cells to do that. As HIV multiplies, it destroys CD4+ cells. In this way, HIV can overpower your immune system.

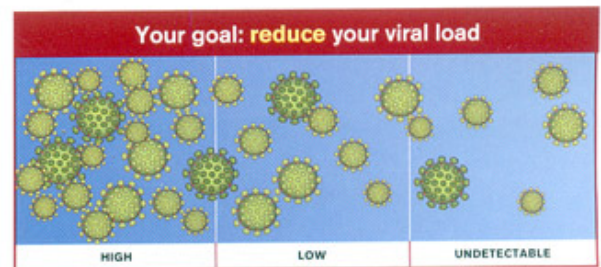
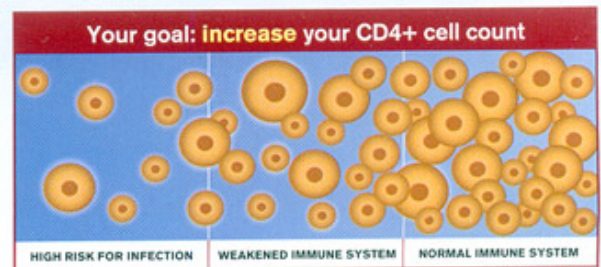
Important numbers to know

CD4+ cell count: shows how well your immune system is working

Viral load: shows the amount of HIV in your blood

Your goals in fighting HIV:

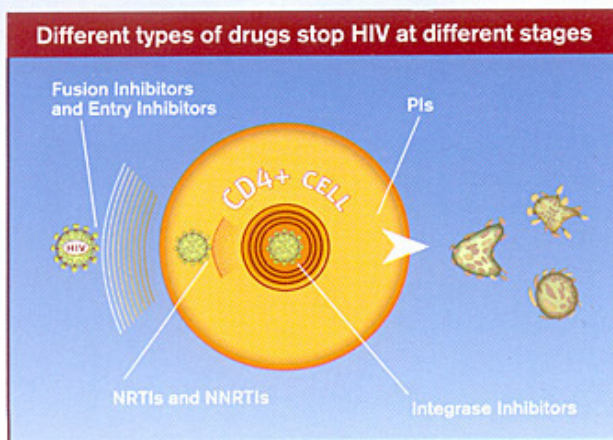
- + To increase your CD4+ cell count
- + To reduce your viral load



You should have your CD4+ cell count and viral load measured every 3-6 months.

One factor that may contribute to starting HIV therapy is when a CD4+ cell count is 500 cells per cubic millimeter of blood or less.

A COMBINED ATTACK ON HIV



The US Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) recommends an HIV regimen, also known as antiretroviral therapy (ART), to treat HIV.

An ART regimen is a combination of 3 or more drugs from two different drug classes. ✓

Types of HIV drug classes:

Fusion inhibitors and entry inhibitors

- help shield the CD4+ cell by blocking HIV from entering it

Nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs)

- also called "nukes," create fake building blocks that stall HIV from copying itself

Non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs)

- also called "non-nukes," bind to and disable the reverse transcriptase protein that HIV needs to replicate

Integrase inhibitors

- help prevent virus replication by disabling the integrase protein so it can't put the virus' genes into the CD4+ cell

Protease inhibitors (PI)

- interfere with HIV's ability to copy itself by disabling the protease protein in the CD4+ cell