

# FITTING ALL THE PIECES

Central Michigan District Health Department  
Case Management Program

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## SIDE EFFECTS MAKE ADHERENCE TOUGH

Medicine should make us feel better, but sometimes HIV meds can cause some nausea or vomiting. Some of the following dietary and lifestyle tips may help you avoid, or at least soothe, an upset stomach:

- Drink certain types of teas (especially ginger, peppermint or chamomile).
- Take ginger, whether it is ginger ale, ginger tea or chopped-up ginger root.
- Eat foods high in fiber.
- Leave dry crackers by your bed and eat one or two when you get up in the morning.
- Eat smaller meals and snack more frequently. Try soups.
- Avoid spicy, greasy or strong-smelling foods.
- Remove strong food odors from the house: open windows while you're cooking, or microwave your meals.
- Eat meals sitting up.
- Don't lie down immediately after eating.
- If you're thirsty after eating a meal, be sure to sip your drink slowly.
- Avoid substances that irritate the stomach, such as alcohol, aspirin, caffeine and tobacco.
- Use meditation and relaxation techniques.
- If you find you can't eat regular meals, be sure to take liquid meal supplements, such as Ensure or other nutritional shakes.

## Clinic Dates

April 26, 2013  
8:30am - 4:30pm

May 31, 2013  
8:30am - 4:30pm

June 28, 2013  
8:30am - 4:30pm

July 19, 2013  
8:30am - 4:30pm



Remember that our offices will be closed on May 27, 2013 in observance of Memorial Day.

### Catrina's Corner

We focus on the important topic of adherence in this issue. Without good adherence. The meds you take can't be effective. Read the articles to find helpful tips on keeping good adherence and managing side effects. Also, always remember to talk with your ID physician about any adherence issues and side effects you are having. If you don't talk about it, then no one knows how to help you. If you haven't already had the privilege of meeting our new dietician Debbie, please be sure to take time during your next appointment to talk with her. She has great ideas when it comes to managing some of those side effects that make adherence tough.

### Commitment To Change



Ready.

Willing..

And Able...

Making Health A Priority

# WHAT DOES YOUR DOCTOR MEAN BY TREATMENT ADHERENCE??

“Treatment adherence” is a fancy phrase that means taking your HIV drugs when and how you are supposed to. Treatment adherence is extremely important because it affects how well your HIV medications decrease your viral load. The lower your viral load, the healthier you are likely to be.

Adherence also helps to prevent drug resistance. If you skip a dose of your medication—even once—the virus can take that opportunity to replicate, and make more HIV. When you skip doses, you may develop strains of HIV that are resistant to the medications you are currently taking—and possibly even to medications you haven’t taken yet. If this happens, it could leave you with fewer treatment options.

Before you begin an HIV treatment regimen, there are several steps you can take to help you with adherence:

- Talk with your healthcare provider about your treatment plan and develop a plan that works for you.
- Be sure you understand why adherence is so important. When you know the possible consequences if you don’t adhere to your treatment plan, you may be more motivated to stick with it.
- Get a written copy of your treatment plan that lists each of your medications and describes how and when to take them.
- Learn all the possible side effects of your medications so that you know what to expect and how to manage any problems.
- Adherence can be harder if you are dealing with life challenges, like substance abuse/alcoholism, unstable housing, mental illness, relationship issues, or other issues. Talk to your doctor about any challenges you may be facing that could affect your ability to take your HIV meds.
- Consider a "dry run." Use candy or vitamins to practice your treatment regimen.
- Schedule taking your medications around your daily routines. That can make it easier to remember and stick to your regimen.
- Ask your provider about the possibility of stopping treatment for a period of time. These treatment interruptions are sometimes called “drug holidays.” **These holidays should only be decided upon in agreement with your HIV care provider.**

Sticking to your treatment schedule takes discipline. But the more you do something, the easier it gets, and HIV treatment is no different. Here are some ideas that may help you stick to your HIV treatment plan:

- Take your medication at the same time each day and keep it in the same place. Try having your computer or cell phone send you an automatic reminder that it’s time to take your meds!
- At the beginning of each week, put your week’s worth of medication in a pill organizer box. (You can get boxes that have compartments for different time periods for each day of the week.) You can use the organizer to adjust for possible changes in routine, like holidays, vacations, etc. Doing this will help you keep track of which meds you’ve taken.
- Watch your supply of medication. Contact your healthcare provider or clinic if your supply will not last until your next visit.

## Support Group

April 8, 2013

May 13, 2013

June 10, 2013

July 8, 2013

August 12, 2013

September 9, 2013

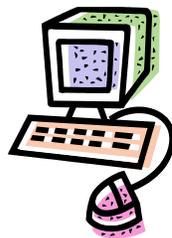
Support Group meets 1:30-2:30pm. Call Catrina at 989-539-6731 ext. 8221

## Websites

[www.thebody.com](http://www.thebody.com)

[www.cmdhd.org](http://www.cmdhd.org)

[www.aidswalkmichigan.org/centralmichigan](http://www.aidswalkmichigan.org/centralmichigan)



## Questions? Comments? Concerns?

### Contact:

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