



NOT EVERYONE WITH HIV NEEDS ARV DRUGS IMMEDIATELY!

Whether or not a person needs antiretroviral (ARV) drugs will depend on the stage of their infection:

- The stage of infection is assessed using a blood test called a CD4 count and also takes into account the clinical symptoms or other illnesses that they may have

IF YOU ARE INFECTED WITH HIV, YOU MAY OR MAY NOT REQUIRE ARV DRUGS AT THE MOMENT

You probably will **NOT** need to start taking ARV drugs if:

- Your immune system is strong, (CD4 count above 200)
- You have **NO** clinical symptoms which indicate that your immune system is not working well e.g. TB, skin infections, pneumonia
- You do not feel that you are ready to start treatment.

HIV INFECTED PEOPLE IN THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR ANTIRETROVIRAL (ARV) DRUGS:

ADULTS AND ADOLESCENTS

- People with a CD4 count of 200 or less; you will need a blood test to tell you this
- People with an AIDS defining illness e.g. pneumonia, meningitis, shingles

But the following are also the pre-requisites:

- South African citizens with an identification document (ID book)
- People who have shown reliability and kept at least 3 treatment readiness appointments
- People who have no history of active alcohol and or substance (drug) abuse
- People who do not have untreated depression
- People who have disclosed their HIV status to a relative or friend.

CHILDREN

- Children who have been admitted to hospital more than twice in the past year for HIV related illnesses
- Children under 18 months old with CD4 of less than 20%; you will need a blood test to tell you this
- Children over 18 months old with a CD4 of less than 15%; you will need a blood test to tell you this
- Children with serious AIDS defining illnesses
- South African citizens with a birth certificate (must be produced)
- Children who are not gaining weight and not growing well
- Children with a stable caregiver
- Children with an adult in the same house who knows their HIV status and who could assist with giving medication.

