

If you have any questions, please call your Nurse Care Manager at 1-800-832-0778.



We're here to help!



**POSITIVE
HEALTHCARE™**

24 Hour Customer
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**POSITIVE
HEALTHCARE™**

**CHOOSING AND
WORKING WITH
HEALTH CARE
PROVIDERS**

Your Health Care Providers

A big part of living healthy with HIV is taking charge of your own care.

How you choose and work with health care providers may depend on your health insurance. But there are some basic things you can do to get the best care possible.

Choosing Your Providers

Most health insurance plans let you select your health care provider when you join. You can also usually change at least once a year.

When you're HIV-positive, choosing the right health care providers is very important. Your providers will be your partners in making major decisions about your health.

Here are some key things to think about when you pick a health care provider:

- **How much experience does the provider have with HIV?**

The more HIV patients a doctor has, the more experienced he or she should be in treating HIV. Your best bet is to find a doctor who specializes in HIV medical care.

- **Will you always see the same provider?**

You may work with several care providers – such as a doctor, a nurse practitioner, a counselor and a nutritionist. You may have one main doctor or see different doctors.

- **Do you see eye-to-eye?**

It's important that you and your provider have similar ideas about treatment. You need to feel comfortable telling him or her about very private things, such as sexual behavior, drug use and missed doses.

- **How easy is it to get in?**

Ask how long it takes to get an appointment. Find out if someone is available 24 hours a day in case of emergency.

- **Are the provider's other patients satisfied?**

Other patients can give you valuable information. Talk to some of them and see what they have to say.



Be an Active Partner

Patients and providers can work together as partners. Do your best to take care of yourself and find out what works for you.

- Know about your health insurance plan.
- Choose a health care provider who can work well with you.
- Talk to your health care providers.
- Be organized.
- Learn all you can about your health care and your options.

Communicating Well

Good communication is key to working well with your health care provider. Most health care providers have busy schedules with many patients. So it's important to communicate clearly in a short time period.

Here are some tips:

Before Your Appointment

- Write down your questions in order of importance. (If you run out of time, you can save the less important questions for your next visit.)
- You may be able to get some questions answered by other sources. Try your local AIDS service agency or a pharmacist.

During Your Visit

- Ask your list of questions. Write down the answers.
- Take notes about what your health care provider tells you.
- Review information about tests and medicines.
- If you don't think you can follow instructions for tests or treatment, explain why.
- Make sure you understand what the next steps are.

After Your Visit

- Think about what went well.
- Think about things that could go better in future visits.
- Make notes so you'll remember your ideas.