

Further information

www.aids.ch

Everything you need to know about living with HIV and where to find advice centres.

www.drgay.ch

Information and advice for men who have sex with men.

This leaflet was produced by the Swiss AIDS Federation in conjunction with **NAM Aidsmap UK**. We recommend that you discuss the information contained in this leaflet with a health care professional.

HIV+

HIV and the immune system



HIV weakens the immune system. The immune system is the body's main form of defence. It detects and fights disease-causing microorganisms.

HIV weakens the immune system. Without drugs, viruses and bacteria that are normally harmless can make you sick.

HIV medications will strengthen the immune system.

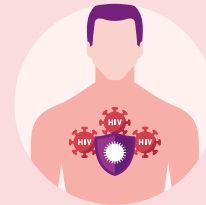


Bacteria and viruses can cause diseases. We constantly come into contact with bacteria and viruses – they can be found in the air, in food and everywhere in our environment.

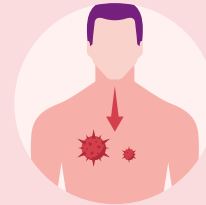


Normally, however, disease-causing microorganisms will not cause problems because the immune system fights them when they enter the body.

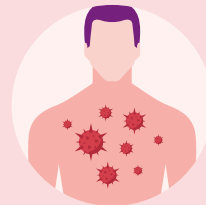
! Weak immune system



HIV has infected many immune system cells.

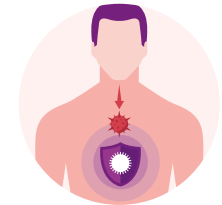


It means there are now not enough cells to fight other viruses and bacteria.

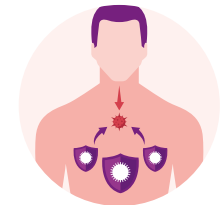


These can multiply in the body and cause illnesses.

✓ Strong immune system



Once a disease-causing microorganism enters the body, it is identified by the immune system cells as being foreign.



Additional immune system cells are activated to attack and destroy the disease-causing microorganisms.