



MINISTRY OF HEALTH



PREVENTING HIV TRANSMISSION

Undetectable =
Untransmittable (U=U)

What is U=U?

Undetectable = Untransmittable (U=U)

communicates the scientific consensus that HIV cannot be sexually transmitted when a person living with HIV takes and adheres to antiretroviral therapy (ART) and maintains a viral load of less than 200 copies/ml (measured every 4-6 months).



KEY FACTS



Regular viral load testing every 4 to 6 months is the only way to know if an individual has reached and maintained viral suppression.



Condoms or pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) are not needed to prevent HIV transmission when a person is virally suppressed. Condoms are still best practice to prevent other sexually transmitted infections or unwanted pregnancy.



U=U applies only to sexual transmission. It does not apply to sharing drug use equipment, or during pregnancy, breastfeeding, or chestfeeding.



A person with a low amount of HIV is not cured of HIV. However, people who take their HIV treatment consistently can live a long healthy life.



HIV antiretroviral medication coverage differs from one region to another.

KEY TERMS

Viral load

The amount of HIV in the blood.

Viral suppression

A viral load less than 200 copies/ml of blood with consecutive measurements every 4 to 6 months.

Undetectable

A viral load that cannot be detected by standard tests. The specific threshold for what is considered “undetectable” may vary depending on the type of test. When referring to U=U, viral suppression and undetectable are used synonymously.

Untransmittable

HIV cannot be transmitted sexually when a person achieves viral suppression (or has an undetectable viral load).

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