



Glossary

The following sources were used to develop this glossary:

- <http://www.sfaf.org/glossary>
- <http://www.gmhc.org/health/glossary2.html>
- 'ARVs in Our Lives' published by TAC
- <http://www.soulcity.co.za>



3TC (Lamivudine, Epivir): a Nucleoside Analogue Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke') antiretroviral drug.

Abacavir (Ziagen, ABC): one of the antiretroviral drugs; a Nucleoside Analogue Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke').

Acquired: Something that you get that is not your own or you are not born with. AIDS is "acquired" because it is contracted from a source of blood or bodily fluid other than one's own.

Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS): the late stage of illness caused by HIV infection. According to WHO, a person has AIDS when their CD4 count is below 200 or they have Stage 4 defining illnesses.

Acyclovir (Zovirax): an antiviral drug used in the treatment of herpes simplex virus 1 (fever blisters, cold sores), herpes simplex virus 2 (genital herpes) and herpes zoster (shingles). Acyclovir comes in the form of capsules or pills, ointment or injection.

Adherence: taking medication in the way it should be taken (i.e. the right amount at the right time of day, and either before or after food as prescribed by a health care worker)

Antenatal: before birth (i.e. antenatal clinic is where pregnant women go for check-ups)

Antibiotic: a kind of medicine used to fight bacterial infections

Antibody: A cell developed by the body's immune system to fight against a germ, such as a virus or bacteria.

Antigen: a foreign substance, usually a protein that stimulates an immune response. Antiretroviral (ARV): a medicine or drug that stops or suppresses the activity of a retrovirus, such as HIV. Nucleoside Analogue Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke'), Non-Nucleoside Analogue Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NNRTI, or 'non-nukes') and protease inhibitors (PIs) are examples of antiretroviral drugs.

Antiretroviral therapy (ART): is the term used for the treatment which slows down the reproduction of HIV in the body. The drugs which form the treatment are often referred as: antiretrovirals, ARVs, anti-HIV drugs and HIV antiviral drugs.

AZT: A Nucleoside Analogue Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke') antiretroviral drug, also known as Zidovudine or Retrovir.

B-cell: also known as B lymphocyte; a white blood cell in the immune system that helps fight infections.

Bacteria: microorganisms that cause disease and infection. For example, TB is a bacterial infection.

Bactrim: also known as Co-trimoxazole; medication that either prevents or is used to treat bacterial infections

Blood transfusion: giving donated blood to a person who has lost a lot of blood in an accident or who has a medical condition, such as Haemophilia. Some people have been infected with HIV through blood transfusions, but today the blood is very carefully tested

Cancer: a malignant tumour or growth which is the result of the abnormal reproduction of cells. Examples of cancer are Kaposi Sarcoma and cervical cancer.

Candidiasis: also known as thrush; an infection due to Candida yeast. The symptoms of oral candidiasis (thrush) and vaginal candidiasis include pain, itching, redness and white patches.

CD4 receptor: also known as gp120; a protein structure on the surface of the CD4 cell that allows HIV to attach, enter, and thus infect the CD4 cell.

CD4 cell: also called CD4 lymphocyte, helper T cell or T cell; a cell in the immune system involved in protecting against infections. HIV enters CD4 cells to reproduce more HI viruses; the destruction of CD4 cells leads to the progression of HIV disease.

CD4 cell count: the most commonly used test to see how the immune system is doing; the absolute number of CD4 cells in one cubic millimetre (mm³) of blood. As CD4 cell count goes down, the risk of developing opportunistic conditions increases. Normal CD4 cell counts are between 600 and 1200 cells/mm³. AIDS is defined as having a CD4 cell count below 200.

CD4 cell percentage: this is more commonly used when treating children living with HIV; it measures the number of CD4 cells as a proportion of the total number of lymphocytes.

Cervical cancer: cancer of the cervix in the uterus; HPV infection increases the chances of getting cervical cancer; all HIV positive women should go for a Pap smear every year to check for cervical cancer.

Combination therapy: using at least two drugs simultaneously to more effectively combat a disease.

Contraceptive: a drug, device, or chemical that prevents a women from becoming pregnant.

Co-trimoxazole (Septra and Bactrim): antibacterial agent comprises of two drugs (Trimethoprim/ Sulfamethoxazole) often given to HIV-positive patients to prevent and treat opportunistic infections such as PCP and toxoplasmosis.

Cryptococcal meningitis: an opportunistic condition caused by the fungus Cryptococcus neoformans and involving the membranes surrounding the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms may include severe headache, confusion, sensitivity to light, blurred vision, fever and speech difficulties.

Cytomegalovirus (CMV): a herpes virus infection that causes serious illness in people with AIDS. CMV can develop in any part of the body but most often appears in the retina of the eye, the nervous system, the colon or the esophagus.

D4T (Stavudine or Zerit): a Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke') antiretroviral drug approved for use as part of combination antiretroviral therapy to treat HIV disease.

Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA): a double-stranded molecule in the centre of a cell that carries genetic information in the form of genes. A cell needs DNA in order to reproduce.

Dehydration: loss or lack of water in the body; dehydration may result from prolonged vomiting or diarrhoea, and can be very serious especially in children and infants.

depression: a mood disorder with prolonged sadness, decreased energy, low self-esteem, sleep disorders, impaired concentration, loss of interest in normal activities, and/or suicidal thoughts

Didanosine (ddi, Videx): a Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke') drug approved for use as part of combination antiretroviral therapy to treat HIV disease. ddi must be taken on an empty stomach.

Directly Observed Treatment Short Course (DOTS): is a strategy launched by WHO to treat TB. It involves the patient being observed every weekday for six months while taking their treatment.

Discordant: not having the same serostatus, for example, a couple in which one partner is HIV positive and the other is HIV negative.

Dose: the measured quantity of a drug to be taken that is effective, safe, and repeatable.

Efavirenz (Sustiva, Stocrin): a non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI) approved as part of combination therapy.

Enzyme-Linked Immunosorbent Assay (ELISA): a type of enzyme immunoassay (EIA) to determine the presence of antibodies to HIV in the blood or oral fluids. Repeatedly reactive (i.e., two or more) ELISA test results should be validated with an independent supplemental test of high specificity, such as the Western Blot test.

Epidemic: a disease that spreads rapidly through a particular population, such as everyone in a given geographic area or everyone of a certain age or sex, such as the children or women of a region. Epidemic diseases can be spread from person to person or from a contaminated source such as food or water.

Oesophageal candidiasis: also called oesophageal thrush; infection of the oesophagus caused by a Candida fungus; oesophageal candidiasis is an AIDS-defining opportunistic illness.

Exposure: When a person has come into contact with HIV we say they have been exposed to it.

Extrapulmonary TB: form of tuberculosis infection not in the lungs that is more common among HIV positive individuals.

False-negative: an incorrect negative result; a negative test result for a person who in fact does have the disease or condition being tested.

False-positive: an incorrect positive result; a positive test result for a person who in fact does not have the disease or condition being tested.

First-line, second-line: refers to type of drug regimen. First-line regimens are often the most effective and safest. A patient uses the second-line regimen only if they have gained resistance to the 1st line or if side effects are too severe to continue using the first-line regimen.

Fixed dose combination (FDC): is when two or more drugs are combined together in one pill, capsule or tablet. FDCs reduce the number of pills or tablets to be taken. Also the person taking the pills cannot leave out one of their drugs by not taking some of the pills. This improves the ability of people to take the drugs correctly (known as adherence) and it limits the emergence of resistance.

Fluconazole (Diflucan): an antifungal drug that is FDA-approved for treating and preventing candidiasis in the vagina, mouth, esophagus and other parts of the body. It is also approved for treating cryptococcal meningitis and in this case is usually administered following two weeks of amphotericin B.

Foreskin: a fold of skin covering the head of the penis; may be removed by circumcision.

Fungus (plural fungi): a class of organisms that includes yeasts, molds, and mushrooms, several of which can cause disease in humans.

Generic: a version of a drug not manufactured by its patent-owner. Generics are much cheaper than brand-name drugs and are usually as safe and effective, thus they are common in developing countries.

Genital: describes the reproductive or sexual organs; for example, genital herpes (herpes simplex virus) affects the sexual organs.

Gonorrhea: a sexually transmitted infection caused by the bacteria *Neisseria gonorrhoeae*. Also known as idrop.

Guidelines: resources published by a global (WHO), national (South African Department of Health), or provincial body (Western Cape Department of Health) that provide a suggested standard operating procedure for healthcare workers in the treatment and management of illness and disease.

Hepatitis: inflammation of the liver caused by microbes or chemicals. Often accompanied by jaundice, enlarged liver, fever, fatigue and nausea and high levels of liver enzymes in the blood.

Hemophilia: a hereditary disease that prevents blood from clotting, leading to easy bleeding and bruising. Hemophiliacs (people with the disease) can need blood transfusions; some haemophiliacs were infected with HIV through blood transfusions

Hepatitis: inflammation of the liver

Herpes simplex virus (HSV): there are two kinds of herpes simplex virus. HSV 1 makes blisters on the lips (cold sores or fever blisters). HSV 2 makes blisters or lesions in the genital area.

Herpes zoster (shingles): a condition characterized by painful blisters caused by a viral infection. Blisters usually follow nerve pathways and are common around the middle of the abdomen.

Highly Active Antiretroviral Therapy (HAART): is a term which is used to describe a combination of three or more antiretroviral drugs. Taking two or more antiretrovirals at the same time vastly reduces the rate at which resistance develops.

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV): a retrovirus that causes AIDS. HIV can be transmitted sexually, by blood-to-blood contact, and perinatally (from mother to child).

Human papillomavirus (HPV): HPV is sexually transmitted; some kinds of HPV cause genital warts, while others can cause cervical cancer.

Immune system: the body's complicated natural defence against disease and infection caused by invading microorganisms (viruses, bacteria, fungi and protozoa) and cancers. Immune restoration syndrome (immune recovery syndrome, IRS): disease that happens when the immune system starts to recover; sometimes happens when people start ARVs when they have a very low CD4 count.

Immunisation: the process of protecting an individual against communicable diseases by injecting weakened or killed infectious organisms or parts of their structure into the body to cause the

immune system to produce antibodies and activate T cells against the organism without causing the full-blown disease.

Incidence (incidence rate): the number of new cases of a disease or condition in a specific population during a given period; for example the number of new HIV infections, in one year in South Africa's population

Isoniazid (aka INH): an antibiotic used in combination regimens to treat tuberculosis.

Kaletra: brand name of lopinavir; an approved antiretroviral medication; Protease Inhibitor (PI)

Kaposi's Sarcoma (KS): an AIDS-defining illness that is caused by cancer of the skin. KS typically appears as pink, purple or brown painless spots or nodules on the surface of the skin or oral cavity.

Lactic acidosis: a possible side-effect from some ARVs. Symptoms can include weight loss, fatigue, malaise, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, shortness of breath and low serum bicarbonate levels.

Lamivudine (3TC, Epivir): a Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke'); antiretroviral drug

Lipodystrophy: a possible side effect of d4T where fat is redistributed to other parts of the body; for example fat might leave the buttocks and make the middle very large.

Lopinavir (Kaletra, LPV): a protease inhibitor (PI). Kaletra (LPV/r) is a combination of Lopinavir and a low dose of Ritonavir, a drug that improves blood levels of lopinavir.

Long-term non progressor: an individual who has been infected with HIV for several years but maintains a high CD4 cell count, does not exhibit symptoms of immune system decline, and has not developed opportunistic illnesses despite never receiving treatment.

Lymphocyte: a type of white blood cell (e.g., T cell, B cell) that plays a part in immune defense.

Macrophage: a large white blood cell (phagocyte) that eats and processes foreign invaders and cellular debris; it is part of the immune system and controls some immune responses.

Medicines Control Council (MCC): South African government agency established in 1965 to oversee the regulation of medicines by ensuring that all medicines sold and used in the country are safe, effective and adhere to acceptable standards of quality.

Medical Research Council (MRC): is a statutory research body established in 1969 by an Act of Parliament. The MRC's task is to improve the health and quality of life of the population of South Africa through excellent scientific research. Health, development, economic growth and the wellbeing of the nation are closely linked, and research is the cornerstone of health care.

Meningitis: inflammation of the meninges, the membranes that cover the brain and spinal cord.

Mother-to-child transmission (MTCT): the transmission of HIV during pregnancy, labour or breast feeding.

Needle-stick injury: When a health worker is pricked with a needle while working in a clinic or hospital. If this happens, post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) is given to the person to help prevent HIV infection.

Nevirapine (Viramune): a Non-Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NNRTI or non-nuke) approved for treatment of HIV-infected adults in combination with nucleoside analogs. Used in the prevention of mother-to-child (PMTCT) programs.

Non-Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NNRTI): a kind of antiretroviral drug, including Nevirapine and Efavirenz, that binds to the reverse transcriptase enzyme of a retrovirus and prevents it from converting viral RNA to DNA, thus blocking viral replication.

Nucleoside Analogue Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke'): a type of antiviral drug, such as AZT (Zidovudine), 3TC, ddI (didanosine) or d4T (Stavudine). Nucleoside analogs may take the place of the natural nucleosides, blocking the completion of a viral DNA chain during infection of a new cell by HIV.

Opportunistic infection (OI): an infection or cancer in people with weak immune systems resulting from HIV infection. Kaposi's sarcoma (KS), pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP) and TB are all examples of opportunistic infections.

Oral candidiasis (oral thrush): a fungal infection of the mouth, which typically appears as white or red patches on the tongue or palate

Pap smear (Papanicolaou smear): a procedure in which a sample of cells is taken from the uterine cervix or anal canal and examined under a microscope for abnormal cell growth; an abnormal Pap smear suggests increased risk of cancer.

Pathogen: any disease-causing agent, especially a microorganism, such as a virus.

Peripheral neuropathy: nerve damage characterised by loss of feeling, pain, muscle weakness in the hands or legs and feet. Peripheral neuropathy can be caused by HIV infection or be the side effect of certain drugs, in particular some of the nucleoside analogs.

Pharmaceutical companies: a company that specialises in producing drugs that improve human health.

Pharmacist: a licensed and professionally trained individual who dispenses medical drugs.

Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia (PCP): a lung infection thought to be caused by Pneumocystis carinii but recently discovered to actually be caused by Pneumocystis jiroveci (which is a fungus). P. jiroveci grows rapidly in the lungs of people with weak immune systems.

Pulmonary: refers to the lungs. For example, pulmonary TB is TB of the lungs.

Prevention of mother-to-child transmission (PMTCT): the use of antiretroviral drugs to prevent a mother from infecting her child during pregnancy and childbirth.

Prophylaxis: treatment to prevent the onset of a particular disease (primary prophylaxis) or recurrence of symptoms in an existing infection that has been brought under control (secondary prophylaxis or maintenance therapy).

Protease: an enzyme that breaks apart proteins as part of the process for making new HI viruses.

Protease Inhibitor (PI): a drug that binds to and blocks HIV protease from working, thus preventing the production of new functional viral particles.

Recurrent: returning or occurring again and again

Regimen: a prescribed drug treatment plan, specifying which drugs are to be used, in what doses and on what schedule.

Resistance: the change or mutation in a microorganism so that it does not react to a particular drug; this means the medication no longer works. For example, in MDR TB, the TB bacteria is resistant to many different kinds of TB drugs.

Reverse transcriptase (RT): an enzyme that allows a retrovirus to convert its genetic material from RNA to DNA, which is then integrated into the host cell.

Ribonucleic acid (RNA): a single-stranded molecule found inside cells. It is similar in basic structure to half of the double-stranded DNA. HIV carries its genetic information in RNA.

Rifampicin: one of the most effective 1st line anti-TB drugs. However, it is known to have a serious interaction with NNRTIs and PIs by causing liver damage.

Safer sex: sexual activities that reduce or prevent the exchange of body fluids that can transmit HIV by means of barriers such as male and female condoms.

Second-line treatment: the second preferred therapy for a particular condition, used after first-line treatment fails or if a person has side effects from taking the first-line drugs.

Semen: a whitish fluid ejaculated from the penis containing spermatozoa and secretions from the prostate gland.

Seroconversion: change in an individual's serostatus from HIV negative to HIV positive; development of antibodies against a microorganism, in this case HIV.

Sexually transmitted infection (STI): any infection which can be spread via sexual contact. Examples include syphilis, gonorrhoea, and herpes.

Side effect: any unintended reaction that results from a drug or therapy. The term usually refers to a negative event, such as nausea, blood disorders or neuropathy.

Simian immunodeficiency virus (SIV): a virus similar to HIV that infects monkeys.

Sputum analysis: a method of diagnosing certain infections (especially TB) using a sample of sputum, the mucus matter that collects in the respiratory and upper digestive passages and is expelled by coughing. A sputum smear is cultured in the laboratory to increase the population of any bacteria it contains.

Stavudine (d4T, Zerit): an approved antiretroviral drug; Nucleoside Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke')

Symptom: any change in the body or its functions that are a result of disease or phases of disease.

Syndrome: a set of symptoms or disease manifestations that occur together and characterize a specific condition.

T Cell (T Lymphocyte): any lymphocyte or cell that matures in the thymus. These include CD4 (T helper cell) and CD8 cells.

Tenofovir (PMPA, Viread): a nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitor drug (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke') approved for use as part of combination antiretroviral therapy to treat HIV disease.

Thrush: an oral fungal infection. Also called oral candidiasis.

Toxoplasmosis ('toxo'): a life-threatening opportunistic condition caused by the protozoa *Toxoplasma gondii*. Toxoplasmosis can affect a number of organs, but it most commonly causes encephalitis (brain inflammation). It is contracted by eating contaminated undercooked meat. There is a very small risk of contracting toxoplasmosis from contact with toxo-containing cat faeces.

Traditional medicine: non-western approach to health care that incorporates plant, animal and/or mineral-based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises to maintain wellbeing, as well as to treat, diagnose or prevent illness.

Transmission: When HIV is passed over from one person to another.

Treatment Action Campaign (TAC): was launched on 10 December 1998, International Human Rights Day. Its main objective is to campaign for greater access to HIV treatment for all South Africans, by raising public awareness and understanding about issues surrounding the availability, affordability and use of HIV treatments.

Treatment literacy: understanding the major issues related to an illness or disease - such as the science, treatment, side-effects, and guidelines - so that the patient can be more responsible for their own care and will demand their rights when proper care is not available to them.

Treatment preparedness: prior to going on treatment, the patient makes sure they are knowledgeable of the treatment they are to undergo, including dosing schedule, side-effects, and mechanism of action. In addition, the patient alters any behaviour which is known to decrease the likelihood of treatment success (i.e. reducing alcohol consumption prior to taking ARVs so as to maintain adherence).

Treatment failure: inability of a medical therapy to achieve the desired result; in HIV, treatment failure typically refers to inability to reduce or completely suppress viral load.

Tuberculosis (TB): a disease caused by the bacterium *Mycobacterium tuberculosis*. TB primarily infects the lungs, but it may attack almost any tissue or organ of the body. TB generally has a long latency period, and only about 10% of infected people with normal immunity ever experience active TB. For people with immune deficiencies, active TB is much more common. TB is transmitted in close quarters when a person with active TB coughs the microbe into the air.

Undetectable: when the viral load can no longer be detected, usually below 50 per ml of blood.

Vaccine: a medicine designed to stimulate an immune response; vaccines typically include killed or weakened microorganisms or parts of microorganisms. A preventive (prophylactic) vaccine is used to prevent initial infection. There is a lot of research to see if we can develop an HIV vaccine that could prevent HIV infection.

Vertical transmission: mother-to-child transmission where a mother passes HIV to her child either during pregnancy or birth or through breast feeding.

Viral load: the number of HIV RNA per ml of blood. An indicator of virus concentration and reproduction rate, HIV viral load is used to measure the success of antiretroviral therapy.

Virus: a non-cellular pathogen that causes infection and disease. Viruses can reproduce only within living cells into which they pass their genetic material

Voluntary counselling and testing (VCT): the process followed when a person wants to know if they are infected with HIV. A pre-test counselling session allows questions regarding HIV/AIDS and the test to be answered. The test is given after a consent form is signed and the results are given in a counselling session regardless of the person's HIV status.

Window period: the time between first infection and the appearance of antibodies against an organism (seroconversion).

World Health Organization (WHO): United Nations specialised agency for health whose objective is 'the attainment by all peoples of the highest possible level of health'. Responsible for establishing global guidelines for treatment and prevention of major health issues.

Zerit: brand name of d4T.

Zidovudine (AZT, ZDV, Retrovir): a Nucleoside Analogue Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitor (NRTI, Nucleoside Analogue or 'nuke'). AZT is also approved for preventing HIV transmission from mother to child.