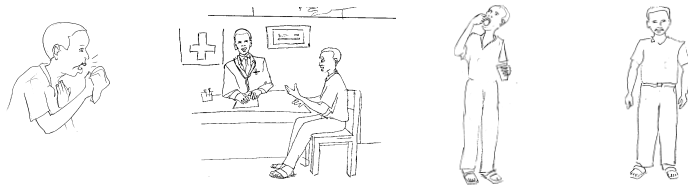


## What is ART?

- If your immune system is very weak, the doctor may advise you to consider taking treatment called ART.
- The full name for ART is antiretroviral therapy.
- If your immune system is still strong, there are other ways that you can protect yourself from opportunistic infections. Ask your doctor about them.



## How ART works

- ART slows down the HIV virus from multiplying and therefore less viruses attack the immune system.
- ART helps the immune system get strong so it can keep out opportunistic infections. Just like repairing a house helps keep out the rain.
- When people take ART they get sick less often and feel better for longer periods of time.



## CD4 Test

Even if you do not feel sick, your doctor may advise you to take a CD4 test. After this test is done, the doctor is able to advise you on how to keep your body healthy.



## Making a Commitment to ART

- Start ART only when you are ready to make a life-long commitment.
- Stopping and starting, and missing tablets stops the ART from working.
- Taking some of the tablets, but not the others, also stops ART from working.

## Ask someone to help you remember

- Your doctor can help you think of ways to help you take your medicines.
- It helps to have someone you trust, a family member or friend, to help you remember to take your ART tablets.



## ART does not cure HIV

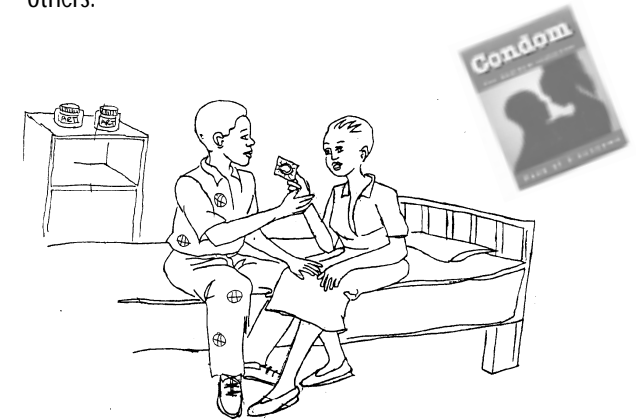
If you are taking ART, you can still give HIV to someone else.

## ART does not prevent re-infection from HIV

- If you are taking ART, you can still get HIV again.
- This may make your immune system weaker.

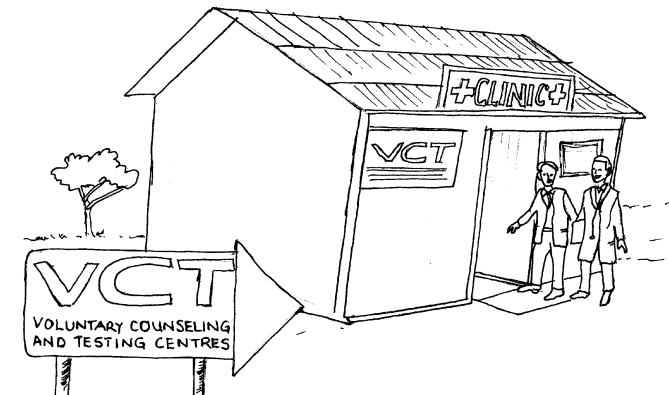
## Protect yourself from HIV

- While you are taking ART, continue to protect yourself and others by using a condom or not having sex.
- Remember by engaging in unprotected sex you can still infect others.



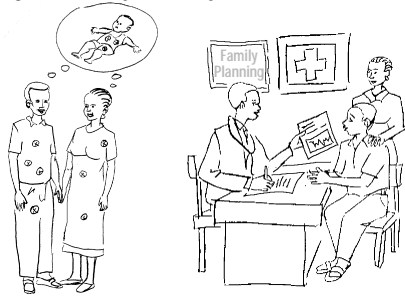
## Go to VCT centers for HIV protection counseling

- Clinics with a Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT) sign can help you talk to your partner about HIV and protection.



## ART and pregnancy

- It is very important to tell your doctor if you are pregnant or want to have a baby.
- If you get pregnant while using ART, there is a small chance that you will give HIV to your baby.



## ART and pregnancy

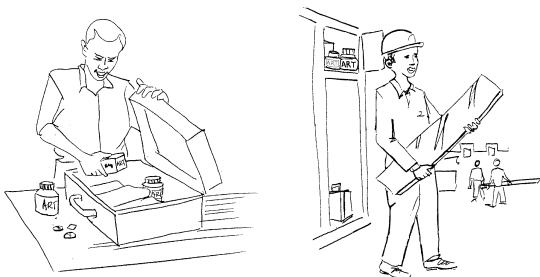
- You can get pregnant while you are using ART.
- Ask your doctor about family planning choices. Your doctor can help you make a decision about what method to use.

## Some ART medicines are safer during pregnancy than others

- Some ART medicines are safer to use while you are pregnant. Talk to your doctor about which ART medicines to use.
- And, remember, tell your doctor right away if you are pregnant or want to have a baby. Your doctor can help you make a decision about what to do.

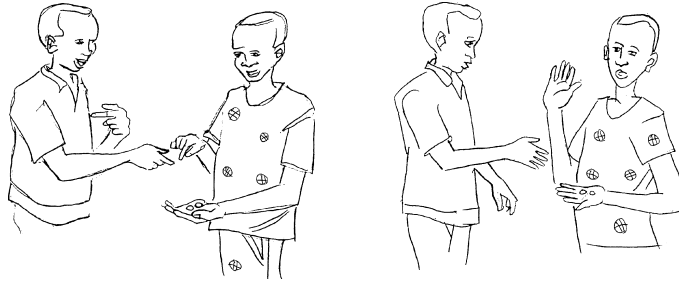
## Plan ahead for work and safaris

- Plan ahead for work
- Plan ahead for how you will take the ART when you are at work.
- If you go on safari, pack more tablets than you need. This will give you enough tablets if you stay away longer.



## Never share your ART drugs

- Never share your ART drugs. The ART drugs will not be of help in your body if not taken as recommended by the doctor.
- If you share they won't work for you or the other person.



## Keep ART in a safe place

- Like all medicines, keep ART in a safe place away from children.

## Starting ART again after you have stopped.

- You might be able to start taking them again later. Sometimes ART does not work as well if you stop for a while and start again later.
- Talk to your doctor if you are thinking of starting ART again. It is very important to take the right ART medicines.



## You are not alone!

Remember, over a million people around the world take ART everyday, you too can take them successfully.

Development of this document was made possible by funding from Pfizer Health Literacy Grant.  
Printing was made possible through funding by  
United States Agency for International Development through Family Health International's IMPACT Project,  
Cooperative Agreement HRN-A0097-00017-00

# Antiretroviral Therapy (ART)



**ART may help you feel strong even if  
your immune system is weak**