

Have more questions?
Need more answers? HIV/
AIDS HOTLINE - Call 1-800-
985-AIDS



Medical Care 101

Whether you are newly diagnosed with HIV or have been living with the virus for many years, navigating the medical system can be complicated, overwhelming, and down right frustrating!

What you need to know about finding the right provider for you!

TIPS: To be your best you!

QUESTIONS to think about and discuss with your provider:

- Is your provider an HIV specialist or a general practitioner? What other support services are available on site?
- What is your doctor's availability? How are emergencies handled? Who is on call if you are sick?
- What type of insurance does your provider take? What are their payment options?
- Does your provider talk with you strictly about test results or will he/she know how to refer you for emotional support, case management, etc..?
- Will your provider work with integrative techniques, i.e., massage, acupuncture, herbs or strictly conventional medicine?
- Is your provider and their staff respectful of your gender and/or sexual identity?
- Ask your provider what is his/her idea of a good provider/patient relationship?
- What is your idea of a good provider/patient relationship?
- Concerned about privacy? Consider seeing a provider in a different area, if that feels right to you!

To find an HIV care provider -
Contact:
Philadelphia
Department of
Health Hotline 800
-929-5602
Action AIDS
(215)-981-0088
AIDS Activity Co-
ordinating Office
(215) 685-5600



REMEMBER

As your needs (medically, emotionally & socially) change, your ideas about treatment may change too!
That's ok!
You have the right to stop seeing one care provider and find another.

TOPICS to think about and discuss with your provider:

- Take an active role in your HIV medical care. **Read, research & ask questions!** Get educated and discuss the information with your provider. There is no such thing as a stupid question!
- Help your provider help you! **Make sure your provider has all the information needed** to give you the best care: i.e.

Medical records— this will give your provider a history and baseline to understand your medical needs.

Medication— tell your provider your feelings about using medication and what other medications you may be taking.

Diet/exercise—are you willing to explore with your provider non-medical interventions to keep your body healthy?

Lifestyle—keep providers informed about your eating, sleeping, smoking, work habits, drug use, and sexual practices.

- Discuss your **support system** with your provider. Think about who the people in your life are who you find supportive, especially someone who can help you make important decisions.