

## **DRUG SIDE EFFECTS**

The medicines that make up the AIDS cocktail (combination therapy) sometimes cause changes in your body. Different people have different reactions. The information in this Fact Sheet is to help you be prepared for some of the changes that may happen so you are not frightened by them.

Some changes may happen in the shape of certain parts of your body after you start using the AIDS cocktail. They are not harmful, but if you notice changes, talk to your doctor, nurse or CHR about this.

### **Here is what happens:**

In some people, fat can build up in certain parts of the body. Fat often increases in these parts of the body:

- Stomach
- Breasts
- Back of shoulders

Other parts of the body can lose fat, making them look thinner. Fat often disappears from these part of the body:

- Face
- Arms
- Legs

### **Other things that can happen – side effects**

Not everyone has the same side effects, in fact, some people have few or none. Often people focus all their energy on side effects and when they do they feel even worse. Some side effects you may feel are:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Diarrhea
- Dry mouth

Keeping track of these feelings can help your doctor and alert him or her to other problems with your health. Make a note of how you feel, and take these notes when you visit your doctor. He or she may be able to help make the side effects easier to deal with. Most side effects go away after a short time. It is important to remember that side effects can be a sign that the medicine is fighting HIV in your body. **If side effects last longer than a few days, or get worse, it is important to see your doctor nurse or CHR. Do not wait till your next visit.**