

AHD-Related Diseases

What diseases
are associated with
Advanced HIV Disease
(AHD)?



1 Tuberculosis (TB)

TB is a bacterial infection, and the leading cause of illness and death among people living with HIV, especially people with AHD and those who are not yet taking ART. Symptoms include coughing, fever, night sweats, and weight loss. People diagnosed with TB should start TB treatment before starting (or re-starting) ART

2 Cryptococcal Meningitis

Cryptococcal meningitis is a serious fungal infection that affects the brain and spinal cord. Symptoms are headache, fever, nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, confusion, and behaviour changes. Adults and adolescents with a CD4 count of less than 200 cells/mm³ should undergo further management. If the test is positive, treatment will depend on the severity of the disease.

3 Pneumocystis Jirovecii Pneumonia (PCP)

PCP is a serious fungal infection that affects the lungs and is a leading cause of illness and death among adults, adolescents, and children with AHD. Symptoms are cough, chest pain, difficulty breathing, fever, and tiredness. It can be prevented and treated with Septrin.

4 Toxoplasmosis

Toxoplasmosis, a common infection caused by a parasite, can make people very ill if their immunity is low. Symptoms may be similar to those of TB, cryptococcal meningitis, or pneumocystis, or headache, confusion, seizures, blurry vision, and poor coordination. Cotrimoxazole can be used to prevent it and for treatment (as well as other options).

5 Severe Bacterial Infections (SBIs)

People with AHD often have severe bacterial infections all over the body. Cotrimoxazole protects against some but not all SBIs. Serious bacterial infections are illnesses caused by harmful bacteria that can make you very sick. Dapsone is available for people who react to Septrin. **SBIs can be treated with appropriate antibiotics.**



6 Cytomegalovirus (CMV)

Individuals with low immunity are at risk for CMV retinitis, a severe eye infection. Symptoms are blurred vision, blind spots, peripheral vision loss, 'floaters' (small white specks), and light flashes. Untreated CMV retinitis causes blindness. ART can prevent CMV retinitis. It can be treated with medicine taken orally or injected into the eye.

7 Kaposi Sarcoma

Kaposi Sarcoma is a type of cancer that develops from the cells that line lymph or blood vessels. It often starts with visible growths or lesions on the skin, it also causes purple, red, or brown spots on the skin. Kaposi Sarcoma can also affect internal organs like the lungs or the digestive system. People living with HIV who are not on ART are more likely to get Kaposi Sarcoma. **Kaposi Sarcoma may be treated with ART and/or appropriate chemotherapy.**

The commonest causes of death among adults are tuberculosis (TB), severe bacterial infections, and cryptococcal meningitis.



Treating these infections

Starting HIV medicine (ART) quickly, & resuming treatment if you stopped. Helping people take their HIV medicine regularly. This will help people with advanced HIV disease live longer and feel better.

Staying Healthy

Getting tested for HIV, starting ART, and taking it every day can prevent HIV from weakening the immune system. For people with advanced HIV disease, taking ART can help the immune system recover, and other medicines can protect you from opportunistic infections. **Please ask your healthcare provider for more information.**



Through the generous support of Unitaid, the Clinton Health Access Initiative (CHAI)-led THRIVE Project is enabling access to critical prevention, screening, and treatment commodities for advanced HIV disease to dramatically reduce mortality among adults and children living with HIV. In partnership with CHAI through this project, AFROCAB is leading community and civil society engagement in collaboration with global and local stakeholders.

All views expressed within these materials are AFROCAB's own.

