

Advanced HIV Disease (AHD)

Frequently Asked
Questions





What is Advanced HIV Disease?

Advanced HIV Disease (AHD) means a person's immune system is very weak — usually because of a low CD4 count — making them more likely to get serious illnesses such as tuberculosis (TB), meningitis, bacterial infections, and other opportunistic diseases.



What are CD4 cells?

CD4 cells are white blood cells that fight infections in the body. The fewer CD4 cells you have, the more you are at risk of illnesses. HIV specifically targets the white blood cell when it enters the body.



What's the relationship between AHD and CD4?

Anyone diagnosed with HIV or starting ART treatment again should have a CD4 test. If someone has Advanced HIV Disease (AHD), their CD4 count is below 200 cells/mm³ for adults, adolescents, and children over five. The risk of death is higher with a low CD4 count, especially below 100 cells/mm³. A CD4 count under 50 cells/mm³ means the disease is very advanced.



What are the AHD warning signs?

A seriously ill adult or adolescent might have:

- Shortness of breath
- Rapid heartbeat
- Unable to walk without help
- High temperature

A seriously ill child might have:

- Sleepiness
- Unconsciousness
- Convulsions (violent, irregular movement)
- Unable to feed
- Repeated vomiting
- High temperature
- Headache
- Stiffness of the neck

<https://www.thriveinfo.org>

<https://www.afrocab.org>

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, AFROCB is leading community and civil society engagement in collaboration with global and local stakeholders.

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