

# HIV Associated Nephropathy (HIVAN)

## What is HIVAN?

HIV can affect the kidneys, the organs in your body that clear out many substances from your blood and produce urine. HIV Associated Nephropathy (HIVAN) is damage to your kidneys from the HIV.

## Who gets HIVAN?

Anyone with HIV can develop HIVAN; people more likely to develop this condition include African-Americans, people with an HIV viral load greater than 5000, people with a low CD4 count, or people who use IV drugs.

## How do I know if I have HIVAN?

Your medical provider should screen you for this disease in two different ways. Yearly you should have an evaluation of your urine (an urinalysis) to look for **protein or blood** in your urine; these can be the first signs that HIV is hurting your kidneys.

Usually your medical provider will get blood work every 3-4 months to look at your **creatinine**, a chemical in your blood cleared by the kidneys. A normal creatinine level depends on your body size but is usually less than 1.4. If your kidneys do not filter your blood as well, the creatinine level will rise. A doubling of your creatinine means that your kidneys are only working half as well as they were.

## How can I prevent HIVAN?

There are three major ways to decrease your chance of developing this condition: take your HIV medications and keep your HIV under control; keep your blood pressure less than 130/80; do not use IV drugs.

## How is it treated?

HIV therapy is the main way that HIVAN is treated. Often a patient will also be placed on blood pressure medicines, such as a class of medicines called ACE-inhibitors, to decrease the damage that can develop. Avoiding a lot of salt in your diet also helps with your blood pressure control. You may also be put on steroids to treat this.



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