WHAT'S A BLIP?

HIV medicines help reduce the amount of HIV in the body, which is called the viral load.

A blip is when the viral load temporarily rises to a detectable level.

When the viral load drops so low it can’t be detected by a blood test, it’s called an undetectable viral load. One goal of HIV treatment is to keep the viral load undetectable.

The viral load then drops back down to an undetectable level.

Frequent blips can be a sign of trouble. But occasional blips can happen to anyone with HIV. **An occasional blip doesn’t mean that your HIV treatment is failing.**

Blips can happen when your immune system is under stress, for example, when you’re sick.

Skipping doses of HIV medicines can also cause blips. Taking your medicines every day can help prevent blips. Keeping your viral load under control is key to a longer, healthier life with HIV.

If you have questions about blips, talk to your health care provider.

For more information, visit HIVinfo.NIH.gov