



Linkage to Care

I am David and I am a 29 year old African-American male. I received my HIV diagnosis last year at 28 years old when I finished college. Currently I live downtown with my roommate, Robert, who is also HIV positive. Robert seemed to feel healthy. I've been refusing treatment because I don't feel anything wrong and I don't want any discomfort of any drug in my body. I always say that I will go to the doctor when I feel sick, but for now I feel great. Last week I took Robert to the emergency room after a very debilitating case of pneumonia. After taking Robert to the hospital and witnessing his illness for several days, I spoke with the hospital's nurse. I discussed my HIV condition with the nurse and she was very surprised that I was not taking my HIV meds. "How come you don't take your meds", she asked me. "Well I don't feel anything wrong yet and I don't want to feel those horrible side effects... so I keep myself healthy, eating well and exercising", I said. "Well I understand, but you will need to be careful since you don't know how strong your immune system is. It will be wise for you to have an appointment with your doctor, and check that out", she said. I didn't want to have any opportunistic infections like my friend Robert so after speaking with the nurse I went home and decided to visit my doctor next week. I think she has a point. I don't want to keep wondering if my immune system is weak. I want to keep myself healthy and live longer; I will visit my doctor next week.

