**Module 1: Principles of Viral Load Monitoring**

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| https://d30y9cdsu7xlg0.cloudfront.net/png/1303-200.png **Time: 60 minutes****Session Objectives**By the end of this session, participants will be able to:* Understand the dynamics of viral load during the course of HIV infection
* https://d30y9cdsu7xlg0.cloudfront.net/png/16392-200.pngUnderstand how viral load affects risk for transmission and progression of HIV
* Explain how viral load responds to antiretroviral therapy
* Identify treatment failure using viral load
* Describe schedule of viral load testing

**Session Overview*** + - Understanding Viral Load
		- Viral Load and HIV Infection
		- Disease Progression
		- Disease Transmission
		- Viral Load Measurement and Reporting
		- Viral Load Response to ART
		- Treatment Failure
		- Criteria
		- Routine and Targeted Viral Load Monitoring
		- Schedule of Viral Load Monitoring

**Materials Needed*** Slides
* Adult Counseling Flipchart
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| 45 minute Lecturehttps://d30y9cdsu7xlg0.cloudfront.net/png/128330-200.png | Trainer will:* Explain the concept of viral load
* Describe how viral load relates to HIV infection, including:
	+ How viral load changes according to disease progression
	+ How viral load affects disease transmission
* Discuss how to measure viral load and interpret results
* Describe how viral load responds to ART
* Explain the definition of treatment failure, including:
	+ Describe the criteria used for treatment failure
	+ Explain the difference between routine and targeted viral load monitoring
* Introduce data that supports adherence counseling improving suppression of viral load and importance of enhanced adherence counseling.
* Discuss the schedule of viral load monitoring for children and adolescents, pregnant or breastfeeding women, and adults.
* Discuss the role of CD4 count testing.
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| 10 minute Activityhttps://d30y9cdsu7xlg0.cloudfront.net/png/33918-200.png | **Activity: Knowledge Assessment**Facilitator will conduct a 3-question knowledge assessment with the participants.  |
| 5 minute Wrap-up | Key points to emphasize in summary:* Viral load predicts progression of disease in an individual, and onward transmission of HIV to sex partners or from mother to baby
* In most individuals, viral load will drop to below levels detectable by viral load blood tests after 6 months of ART
* Viral load testing is the preferred method for detecting treatment failure for ART patients and should be checked after 6 months on ART
* Viral load <1000 copies/ml indicates acceptable response to ART
* Virologic treatment failure: persistent (2 or more VL test results >1,000 with the initial test being performed >6 months on ART and the 2nd test performed after adherence counseling and a minimum of 3 months of good adherence)
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**Methodologies**



* Lecture
* Activity: Knowledge Assessment

**Advance Preparation for Trainers**

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* Trainer must update slides 27, 28, 29, and 31 with the schedule for routine viral load monitoring and CD4 testing according to their country’s national guidelines.