

Antiviral drug

Antiviral drugs are a class of medication used specifically for treating viral infections rather than bacterial ones.

Most antivirals are used for specific viral infections, while a broad-spectrum antiviral is effective against a wide range of viruses.

Unlike most antibiotics, antiviral drugs do not destroy their target pathogen; instead they inhibit their development.

Antiviral drugs are one class of antimicrobials, a larger group which also includes antibiotic (also termed antibacterial), antifungal and antiparasitic drugs, or antiviral drugs based on monoclonal antibodies.

Most antivirals are considered relatively harmless to the host, and therefore can be used to treat infections. They should be distinguished from viricides, which are not medication but deactivate or destroy virus particles, either inside or outside the body. Natural antivirals are produced by some plants such as eucalyptus and Australian tea trees.

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Last update: **2024/06/07 02:53**

