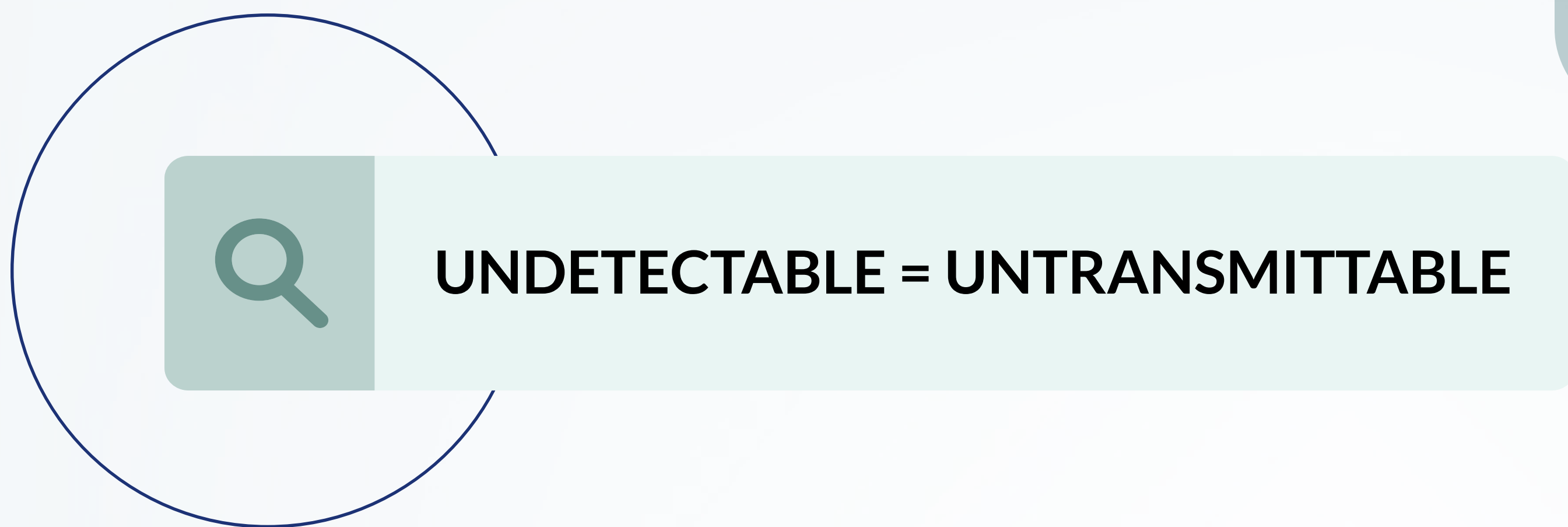


# HIV FACTSHEET

## U=U For Health Professionals



Early initiation of antiretroviral therapy (ART) improves overall health and prevents sexual transmission of HIV

The goal of treatment is to achieve and maintain an undetectable viral load

Studies have shown that effective ART prevents sexual transmission of HIV <sup>1-5</sup>

People living with HIV who take ART and who achieve and maintain an undetectable viral load have effectively **NO RISK** of transmitting HIV sexually

**INTEGRATE U=U INTO ROUTINE HIV CARE**

Condoms are the only effective strategy to help prevent other STIs

- Adherence to ART is essential for achieving and maintaining an undetectable viral load
- It can take up to 6 months to achieve an undetectable viral load
- Regular viral load testing is the only way to know if viral levels are undetectable
- At least 2 consecutive undetectable results over a 6 month period are required before U=U can be used as a prevention strategy
- An undetectable viral load does not prevent the transmission or acquisition of other sexually transmitted infections (STIs)
- In addition to U=U, other highly effective ways of preventing HIV transmission or acquisition include condoms and oral pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)

Discuss the benefits of HIV treatment

U=U can transform lives and reduce stigma

? **WHAT IS**

**VIRAL LOAD**

Amount of HIV in the blood

**UNDETECTABLE**

Viral load less than 40 to 50 copies/ml and cannot be detected by standard tests

**UNTRANSMITTABLE**

When an undetectable viral load prevents the sexual transmission of HIV

**RESOURCES**

- [Statement on behalf of the Council of Chief Medical Officers of Health](#)
- [Criminal justice system's response to non-disclosure of HIV](#)
- [Risk of sexual transmission of human immunodeficiency virus with antiretroviral therapy, suppressed viral load and condom use: a systematic review \(CMAJ\)](#)
- [The use of early antiretroviral therapy in HIV-infected persons \(AMMI Canada\)](#)
- [U=U: A guide for service providers \(CATIE\)](#)

For more information, please visit:  
[Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca) and search HIV for health professionals

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