# Surviving Behind the Walls

November 1, 1998 By Bob Lederer

People with HIV on the street, struggling for dignity and survival, have learned the hard way that there's no substitute for aggressively taking their health into their own hands. That goes double for men and women in the joint, where abuses—especially denial of basic prevention and treatment options—are far worse. The pages that follow offer tools to help—from medication to meditation, needle-cleaning to weight-lifting. But these short pieces just scratch the surface of this complex disease: Contact the organizations listed on page 94 for more information not only on treatment but how to advocate for better policies. Be insistent—but diplomatic—in asking medical staff questions (write them down beforehand), and bring along articles with treatment updates. Though the odds are stacked against you, there are still many ways to fight to keep your friends and yourself alive.

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