

## Treatment failure

---

The tendency is to blame the treatment if a person cannot tolerate it or if it does not "help". If a study physician stops treatment in a trial, the action is ascribed to "treatment failure". If a person stops taking a study treatment the action is due to "treatment failure". However, in truth, one rarely knows what has failed. Hence, the term is best avoided in favor of more operational-based language having to do simply with cessation or interruption of treatment.

**treatment failure** *n* - [trials] 1. The **failure** of a **treatment**, as administered to a person or **treatment unit** in a trial, to produce the desired **effect** or **result**. 2. Such a failure as observed, inferred, or declared by a **study physician** or other study personnel from measurements, evaluations, or **observations** on the person or treatment unit in question and accompanied by **cessation** of that treatment or a **treatment switch**. 3. A person or treatment unit **enrolled** in a **trial** no longer receiving the **assigned treatment**; especially when the cessation occurred because of concerns regarding the **safety** or **efficacy** of the treatment. *Usage note:* The term should be used with caution because of the implied conclusion regarding the treatment itself. Its use should be limited to settings where there is supporting evidence indicating a failure. It should not be used simply as a synonym for **treatment cessation** regardless of reason, eg, in relation to defn 3. See note for **value-laden term** for additional comments.