

ATAC's annual rating of drug company policies and practices

Roche	
<i>Grading Categories</i>	<i>Grade</i>
Drug Development Portfolio and Plan– <i>Develops innovative treatments, designs safe and effective clinical trials.</i> Roche has formally withdrawn from development of HIV drugs. It has an active hepatitis C research program.	D+
Access to Drugs– <i>Ensures the earliest and broadest possible access of its HIV drugs.</i> Though Roche offered a patient assistance program for Fuzeon (enfuvirtide) and Invirase (saquinavir), it refused to expand the Fuzeon program for patients in states whose AIDS drug assistance programs had not added the drug to their formularies. Thus, Roche used some of the sickest, most desperate patients as hostages in its negotiations with these states.	D-
Pricing– <i>Prices its products responsibly.</i> Roche's Fuzeon is the most expensive HIV drug on the market by a wide margin. The excessive price initially kept some states' AIDS drug assistance programs from offering it to needy patients.	D-
Community Relations– <i>Engages the HIV community on trial design, company conduct and marketing efforts.</i> At one time Roche offered a program to provide support from nurses for people taking Fuzeon, a twice-daily injectable drug that can cause injection-site reactions. However, community attempts to get Roche to adequately promote the program went unheeded. Roche no longer offers the program.	D+
Marketing Practices– <i>Engages in marketing practices that are ethical and honest.</i> Roche ran an ad campaign for Fuzeon that many in the community felt was insensitive to people who had run out of treatment options and that underplayed challenges with injecting the drug. Training materials for self-administration of the drug were created in consultation with the community, but marketing materials were not.	D
Average Grade:	D
Suggestions for Improvement: Roche needs to lower the cost of Fuzeon and widen access to its patient assistance and co-pay programs.	