

DVD Review: Gabriel Byrne Shines in HBO's Epic 'In Treatment'

Submitted by [BrianTT](#) [1] on March 24, 2009 - 1:35pm

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DVD Rating: **3.5/5.0**

CHICAGO – Like therapy itself, [HBO](#) [8]'s "[In Treatment](#) [10]" requires a commitment. The award-winning program aired from Monday to Friday on HBO for nearly nine weeks and took up forty-three episodes. If you're starting from the beginning of "In Treatment," you will need to clear approximately 1,290 minutes of your schedule. Don't go in half-heartedly.

At its best, "In Treatment" has a fly-on-the-wall quality that will nearly make you squeamish. It's like sitting in on someone else's therapy session. Every episode features another real-time session with a different patient of Dr. Paul Weston ([Gabriel Byrne](#) [7]), culminating in the last episode of the week comprising Paul's own session with his therapist.



In Treatment was released on DVD on March 24th, 2009.

Photo credit: HBO/Claudette Barius

On Mondays, we join Dr. Weston with Laura ([Michelle George](#) [16]), a young doctor who has fallen in love with her shrink after falling out of it with her boyfriend. George, always an interesting and underrated actress, does the best work of her career on "In Treatment".

Tuesdays feature Alex ([Blair Underwood](#) [2]), a Navy pilot reevaluating his life after a failed mission in Iraq that has turned into an international scandal. Alex is aggressive, pushing back at Dr. Weston before he's sure that he has the best possible doctor to get him through something that has clearly damaged him and perhaps irreparably.



In Treatment was released on DVD on March 24th, 2009.
Photo credit: HBO/Claudette Barius

Hump day is devoted to the actress who largely got the most positive press (outside of the award-winning lead work by Byrne, of course) as [Mia Wasikowska](#) [13] plays a teenage gymnast with suicidal tendencies. Thursday is turned over to marriage counseling with a passionate couple ([Josh Charles](#) [11] and [Embeth Davidtz](#) [6]) who are in some deep trouble.

Finally, Fridays are handed over to Gina ([Dianne Wiest](#) [4]), who talks the good doctor through his own problems.

If you could watch someone else's therapy, would you? The writing is good enough on "In Treatment" that there are moments where it actually feels like that, as if you're listening in on something you really shouldn't be allowed to hear.

It's truly addictive television and just one part of the best year that HBO had in ages with this show, "[John Adams](#) [17]," "[Generation Kill](#) [18]," and "[True Blood](#) [19]". After some struggles to define the network after "[Sex and the City](#) [20]," "[The Sopranos](#) [21]," and "[Six Feet Under](#) [22]," "In Treatment" is clearly a part of the new wave of the most influential network on television (and returns on April 5th for a second season. Watch for a TV review around then.)

Why not release "In Treatment" on Blu-Ray? At least that way the 21 hours of the show wouldn't take up so much damn shelf space. The standard-only release takes up nearly as much width on my DVD shelf as the ENTIRE series of "The Wire". It's an oddly enormous box.

Perhaps because HBO knows how much time you'll have to spend on the actual couch, they provide nothing in the special features department for "In Treatment". This may seem to make sense at first but it's illogical if you think about it. If you spend nearly a day with a show, wouldn't you spend more time learning about how it was made or listening to a commentary?

The show itself is fantastic with one of the best lead performances of the last few years (Byrne won the Golden Globe for Best Male Lead in a Dramatic Series), but the home release is a little disappointing with its standard-only issuing and complete absence of special features. You should definitely sit down on your own couch for a great show, but HBO could have done a bit better with the DVD set.

'In Treatment' is released by HBO Home Video and stars Gabriel Byrne, Melissa George, Blair Underwood, Mia Wasikowska, Josh Charles, Embeth Davidtz, and Dianne Wiest. It was created by Hagai Levi with Ori Sivan & Nir Bergman. It was released on March 24th, 2009. It is not rated.



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By [BRIAN TALLERICO](#) [24]
Content Director
HollywoodChicago.com
brian@hollywoodchicago.com [23]

Source URL (retrieved on **Apr 25 2024 - 10:52am**):

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