Brain Storm

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Memantine, a drug long used in Europe for dementia in the elderly, may help restore impaired brain-cell function in PWAs. In a European study of those with HIV-related mental and movement dysfunction, treatment with memantine led to significant improvements in the ability to perform daily living activities. That's especially good news given the alarming 70 percent to 90 percent incidence of neurological problems in people with very advanced HIV. Available from New York's PWA Health Group, memantine is now being studied in Phase III U.S. trials. Although this drug doesn't work directly against HIV, the increasing promise of antiretrovirals that better penetrate the brain, plus these latest memantine results, may offer hope to PWAs with these tough-to-treat conditions.

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