Carnitine Boosts CD4s

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Increasing CD4 counts with a nontoxic agent already available sounds like wishful thinking. But according to Italian researchers, a trial of the amino acid L-carnitine has shown just that in eight of 11 patients. Intravenous infusions of six grams of L-carnitine were given daily for four months. Median CD4s increased from 331 to 476.

The researchers found that the amino acid significantly reduces the frequency of programmed cell death—called apoptosis—thought to be a major factor in the loss of CD4s. Dr. Sonia Moretti of Rome's La Sapienza University says, "Complementing antiretroviral therapy with L-carnitine may be an attractive approach."

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