Gender Bender

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The “second” sex has long been a second-class citizen in the land of AIDS research and care, so it was sweet revenge to read in last winter’s *Journal of AIDS* that women may fare better than men on HAART. A Brit study showed that despite having lower CD4 counts and comparable viral loads when starting the meds, ladies benefited as much as dudes did. A similar Columbia University study found that women who started HAART with CD4s and viral loads equivalent to their male peers’ were more likely to clear the “undetectable” hurdle. And UCSF researchers looked back at 10 years of med records to discover that gals consistently had viral loads two-to-six-fold lower than guys at similar stages of disease. Why? With research into female HIVers still mincing 10 feet behind men, don’t expect answers anytime soon.

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