Advances in CCR5 Gene Therapy Give New Hope for HIV Cure

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After an HIV-positive man known as the “Trenton patient” underwent an experimental gene therapy procedure, his body was able to briefly control the virus after he stopped taking antiretroviral (ARV) medications, *The New York Times* reports. Scientists removed the man’s CD4 cells, then used a gene therapy developed by Sangamo BioSciences to make them resistant to infection by eliminating the CCR5 gene (HIV infects CD4 cells via CCR5 protein on the cell’s surface). The treated white blood cells were then infused back into his body. The process proved unsuccessful in five other people, and the Trenton patient is back on ARVs. Nonetheless, the intermittent functional cure is encouraging. Also inspired by the recent success of the “Berlin patient,” who was cured of HIV and leukemia by receiving a transplant of bone marrow that lacked CCR5, more medical researchers and investors are pursuing an HIV cure.

To read the *Times* article, click here.

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