Nuke Wars

d4T bests AZT in sales

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Bristol-Myers Squibb's flagship nucleoside analogue d4T (Zerit) slipped past its main rival, Glaxo Wellcome's AZT (Retrovir), in the race for U.S. sales for the first time ever last winter, according to IMS America market researchers. Said the AIDS Treatment Data Network's Rich Jefferys, "It's because d4T is better tolerated, and there's growing concern about resistance to AZT."

Big news at February's Retrovirus Conference was that the Glaxo dinosaur may sabotage future anti-HIV regimens. A study showed that in people not previously on AZT, d4T reduced viral loads by 95 percent, while d4Ters already AZT treated had decreases of 70 percent or less. Another confab report confirmed a year-long community buzz: That the combo of BMS's d4T and Glaxo's 3TC is at least as potent as Combivir -- aka AZT/3TC -- the company's new adherence-friendly two-in-one. So what are the odds of a single d4T/3TC pill? That combo may well be, as Glaxo's glossy purrs, "smarter together."

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