Reinfection Revisited

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For HIVers debating whether to rubber up with other poz partners, two new studies offer contradictory data. In the first, already-infected chimps were exposed to a second HIV strain that went on to take hold in the body. This is evidence that reinfection can occur, although the virus that caused the initial infection continued to greatly outnumber the new strain. In the second study—released at press time to considerable controversy—DNA sequencing revealed that different strains of HIV-1 (the type most common in the developed world) all have the same base structure, suggesting that reinfection may be more fiction than fact. But researchers emphasize that this does not preclude the possibility that a new, more aggressive or multidrug-resistant strain might take over, accelerating disease progression.

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