TB or Not TB

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A new study by Atlanta's Grady Memorial found that the hospital's rates of HIV/tuberculosis coinfection plunged in the '90s (from 102 in 1992 to 39 by 2000) -- confirming the national TB trend, which last year hit an all-time low. Meantime, the one-year survival rate among HIV/TBers rose from 58 percent in '91 to 83 percent in '97. The authors attributed the shiny, happy numbers to better prevention-and-control measures such as routine TB screening of all HIV-clinic newcomers, better therapy for active TB and HAART's power to make HIVers less susceptible to TB. Meanwhile, a recent study of HIV/TBers from the UK threw more weight behind what we already know: It's better to delay HAART until after the first two months of TB combo therapy -- unless your T cells clock in at 100 or less. The rationale? Initial TB treatment plus HAART often makes for a side-effects train wreck.

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