Twice-Yearly Checkups May Be All That's Needed to Control HIV

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A recent study found that HIV-positive people with undetectable viral loads experience the same rates of virologic control whether they undergo checkups every three, four or six months. Challenging the current gold standard of quarterly doctor's visits, the findings could ultimately help lower both the cost and hassle of HIV treatment for those who have stable HIV. April Buscher, MD, an attending physician at Durham VA Medical Center in North Carolina, announced the findings of her study at the IDWeek 2012 meeting in San Diego, first reported by MedPage Today. Conducting the study while she was a resident at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston, Buscher and her colleagues performed a retrospective cohort study that identified 1,512 men and 653 women, all of whom had undetectable viral loads at the beginning of the study. Dividing the cohort into subsets that saw their physicians at three, four or six-month intervals, the researchers found that in all three categories about 75 percent of patients maintained virologic control after one year. The data about those who waited six months between doctor visits may be limited, however, because that cohort was relatively small. The study also found that those who cancelled appointments were more likely to develop a detectable viral load.

To read the MedPage Today report, click here.

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