Low Vitamin D Hinders CD4 Gains in Women Starting HIV Treatment Late

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Women who start HIV treatment late in the course of their infection gain fewer CD4 cells if they have insufficient vitamin D levels, government scientists have reported in the online edition of AIDS, according to aidsmap. After previous studies found a high prevalence of low vitamin D among people with HIV and also found that these deficiencies hinder CD4 cell increases among men who start treatment late, investigators from the Women's Interagency HIV Study (WIHS) sought to determine if women experience a similar reaction to the vitamin deficiency.

The study looked at 204 HIV-positive women, 89 percent of whom had vitamin D deficiency, who began taking antiretrovirals (ARVs) when their CD4 levels were below 200. Researchers found that, after two years of HIV therapy, vitamin D-deficient women had an average gain of 134 CD4s while those with adequate vitamin D levels gained 188 of the immune cells. Researchers determined that this difference was statistically significant and that it indicated low levels of vitamin D indeed have a negative effect on CD4 replenishment among women starting treatment late.

To read the aidsmap report, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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