Cure: Another Person Cured of HIV?

This case could provide clues to help researchers develop more widely applicable strategies for long-term HIV remission.

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A 66-year-old Southern California man appears to be the fifth person cured of HIV after undergoing a stem cell transplant to treat cancer. Like Timothy Ray Brown (the Berlin Patient), the man, dubbed the City of Hope Patient, received stem cells from a donor with a rare genetic mutation, called CCR5-delta32, that blocks HIV from entering T cells. Compared with the other people previously cured using this approach, this man is older, has been living with HIV longer (since 1988) and received less harsh chemotherapy. After the transplant in 2019, he stayed on antiretroviral therapy for two years with an undetectable viral load before trying a carefully monitored treatment interruption. At the time of the report at the International AIDS Conference in July, he had been free of HIV for more than 17 months after stopping antiretrovirals. Experts caution that the risky transplant procedure is not an option for most people with HIV, but this case could provide clues to help researchers develop more widely applicable strategies for long-term HIV remission.

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