Cure: Another Cure?

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May 16, 2022 By Liz Highleyman

A woman in New York City has no detectable HIV a year and a half after stopping antiretroviral treatment and four and a half years after undergoing a new type of transplant using HIV-resistant stem cells. The middle--aged, mixed-race woman, who was being treated for leukemia, received a combination of umbilical cord blood cells with a rare mutation known as CCR5-delta32, which blocks HIV from entering cells, and partially matched adult stem cells from a relative. She remained on antiretroviral therapy for three years post-transplant with an undetectable viral load and no detectable HIV DNA in her immune cells (reflecting the viral reservoir). At that point, she stopped HIV treatment. She has not experienced viral rebound and tests negative for HIV antibodies. Researchers have been unable to find intact HIV in nearly 75 million of her CD4 cells. Time will tell if the New York Patient is cured, but experts caution that this risky procedure will not be appropriate for most people living with HIV.

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