Hardened Arteries Are Linked to HIV Rather than ARVs

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HIV infection rather than antiretroviral (ARV) treatment is linked to a risk for atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) among those who have never smoked, in particular those who have lived with the virus for eight more years. Publishing their findings in the journal AIDS, researchers conducted a retrospective study of 100 people living with HIV for at least two years who had never smoked, half of whom were treatment naive and half of whom had been on treatment for at least four years. There were also 50 HIV-negative controls.

The researchers found that the levels of carotid intima-media thickness (c-IMT, an measure of cardiovascular health) were higher in those who had been living with the virus for at least eight years, regardless of their treatment status. A longer time living with HIV was also linked with a diminished anti-inflammatory response.

“Lower anti-inflammatory response has been linked to increased risk for atherosclerosis, pointing to a potential mechanism within the context of HIV,” Franck Boccara, MD, PhD, a professor of cardiology at Saint-Antoine hospital in Paris and a co-author of the study, said in a release.

The authors caution that the study does not establish a causal relationship between HIV and atherosclerosis, just an association.

To read the release, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/atherosclerosis-link-24735-1221