Biktarvy Is Safe for Seniors

Pooled results from recent studies found a high rate of full viral suppression and no major safety concerns.

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One year after 140 people age 65 and older switched their antiretroviral (ARV) regimen to Gilead Sciences' Biktarvy (bictegravir/tenofovir alafenamide/emtricitabine), the pooled results of four studies found a high rate of full HIV suppression and a low rate of adverse health events.

Upon entering the study, 22% of the seniors had diabetes, 55% had high blood pressure, 24% had cardiovascular disease and 59% had abnormal blood lipids. All had a fully suppressed viral load thanks to different ARV regimens.

Forty-eight weeks after making the switch to Biktarvy, 92% of the participants had a fully suppressed viral load. None experienced virologic failure.

Biktarvy proved safe and well tolerated: 8% of the seniors experienced mild or moderate drug-related adverse health events, and just 3% discontinued the regimen due to such events.

"As the number of older adults living with HIV grows, it's critical to optimize therapy to fit the unique needs of this key population, including those with chronic conditions who may be on multiple medications," says lead author Moti Ramgopal, MD, of Midway Immunology and Research Center in Fort Pierce, Florida. "Adults 65 years and older who switched to Biktarvy maintained viral suppression without a significant impact on lipid levels such as cholesterol, weight or interactions with other drugs they may be taking."

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