Treatment: Hope for ARV-Free Treatment

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New laboratory research has shown that what are known as broadly neutralizing antibodies (BNAs) can block HIV from entering or replicating inside of CD4 cells. This suggests that one day HIV-positive people could receive periodic treatment with BNAs instead of taking daily antiretrovirals (ARVs). Researchers drew virus from the latent reservoirs of 29 HIV-positive people on ARVs who had a fully suppressed viral load. Testing how effectively various BNAs combatted the virus in the lab, they found that several, notably PGT121, VRC01 and VRC03, both blocked the virus's entry into CD4s and stopped replication in infected cells. Clinical trials are underway to test whether using either individual BNAs or combinations of the antibodies can control HIV without the need for ARVs.

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