



Cure: 7th Stem Cell Cure

A German man dubbed the Next Berlin Patient received a stem cell transplant to treat leukemia in October 2015.

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A German man dubbed the Next Berlin Patient appears to be the seventh person cured of HIV after a stem cell transplant to treat cancer. But unlike the original Berlin Patient, Timothy Ray Brown, he received stem cells from a donor with only one copy of the rare genetic mutation CCR5-delta32, which prevents HIV from entering cells. Only about 1% of people of Northern European descent have two copies of the mutation, but around 16% have one copy, which could expand the donor pool. The man received a stem cell transplant to treat leukemia in October 2015. Prior to the transplant, he underwent whole-body radiation and intensive chemotherapy, and he developed mild graft-versus-host disease. He stopped antiretroviral therapy in September 2018, but his viral load did not rebound. Six years later, he is still in remission with no detectable virus or HIV-specific T-cell responses. The risky transplant procedure is not an option for most people with HIV, but each new case provides clues that could help researchers develop more widely applicable strategies for long-term remission.

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