



Cure: Alcoholism Drug

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The anti-alcoholism drug Antabuse (disulfiram) apparently prompts the activation of cells latently infected with HIV. This finding could contribute to a strategy for curing the virus, since standard antiretroviral treatment cannot target cells when they are in a latent, or resting, state.

Researchers gave various doses of Antabuse daily for three days to 30 HIV-positive people who had CD4 counts over 350 and undetectable viral loads. Looking at samples taken from the participants at various times, the researchers found evidence that Antabuse increased HIV RNA in cells and in plasma, which is consistent with the activation of latent virus. The drug proved safe and well tolerated. Side effects were mild, and the participants experienced no serious health problems.

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