Cure: Another HIV Cure?

A man with HIV is in long-term viral remission after intensified treatment.

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A Brazilian man is in long-term HIV remission after receiving intensified antiretroviral therapy plus nicotinamide, a form of niacin. So far, the only two people cured of HIV received stem cell transplants from a donor with HIV-resistant immune cells. But this procedure is too dangerous for people without life-threatening cancer. In 2015, as part of a clinical trial, the São Paulo man had two additional antiretrovirals, Tivicay (dolutegravir) and Selzentry (maraviroc), added to his three-drug regimen along with nicotinamide, which may keep T cells from going into a resting state that can harbor latent HIV. After 48 weeks, he went back to standard treatment. In March 2019, he started a closely monitored treatment interruption. More than 15 months later, he continues to have undetectable HIV RNA and HIV DNA, and his HIV antibodies have fallen to a very low level. Experts caution that this is only a single case—four other people on the same intensified regimen experienced viral rebound. Further testing is needed to show if he is functionally cured.

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