Cure: Gene-Editing Method

Scientists have discovered a swifter and more precise way to edit the genome of immune cells, opening doors for cancer and HIV therapies.

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Researchers have developed a new, cutting-edge way to edit the genome of CD4 immune cells that could hold promise as a tool for the HIV cure research field. While early research into this method has focused on manipulating immune cells to treat cancer or autoimmune disease, scientists believe it could be used to engineer HIV-resistant CD4 cells. Currently, researchers in the gene-editing field, including those focusing on HIV, commonly use a deactivated virus, known as a viral vector, to deliver genetic code into cells. Such gene editing is time-consuming and expensive. The new method harnesses the power of electrical fields to deliver new genes to immune cells with the CRISPR-Cas9 genome-targeting method. This system is much more precise and much faster, reducing the editing process from months or even a year to a matter of mere weeks.

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