Kaletra and Epivir Dual Therapy Works as Well as Triple Combo

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Treating HIV with a dual regimen of Kaletra (lopinavir boosted with ritonavir) and Epivir (lamivudine) is as effective as a standard triple regimen of Kaletra plus two nucleoside/nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs), aidsmap reports. Researchers conducted an open-label Phase III study of 426 treatment-naive people with HIV and presented their findings at the 14th European AIDS Conference in Brussels.

The study participants were randomly assigned to take twice-daily Kaletra plus Epivir or to take Kaletra plus two NRTIs in a fixed-dose pill. Among those taking the two NRTIs, 9 percent took Epzicom (lamivudine/abacavir), 37 percent took Truvada (tenofovir/emtricitabine) and 54 percent took Combivir (lamivudine/zidovudine).

Eight percent of those in the double therapy group discontinued participation in the study, compared with 14 percent in the triple therapy group. Another 10 people left the study before beginning treatment. After 48 weeks of treatment, this left 88 percent of the group assigned to dual therapy reaching an undetectable viral load and 84 percent of the triple therapy group doing so. Looking just at those who completed treatment, a respective 96 and 97 percent of each group achieved an undetectable viral load. Each group also elevated its initial median CD4 count of 325 by a respective 227 and 217 cells.

Among those who began the study with high viral loads, 87 percent in the dual therapy arm and 78 percent in the triple therapy arm achieved an undetectable viral load.

Dual therapy appeared to lead to an improved side effect profile. One percent of that group discontinued the study early because of adverse side effects or death, compared with 5 percent of the triple therapy group. While both treatments were safe and well tolerated, 65 people taking dual therapy experienced grade 2 or 3 adverse side effects, compared with 88 in the triple therapy arm.

To read the aidsmap story, click here.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/dual-therapy-24667-2317