Cure: No Virus After Early Start on ARVs

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A man who contracted HIV perhaps 10 days before starting a pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) regimen and who then received full antiretroviral (ARV) treatment an estimated 18 days after infection shows no sign of the virus a year later. While he tested negative twice during the month before taking Truvada (emtricitabine/tenofovir) as PrEP, the blood sample drawn the day he started the regimen eventually came back positive. At that point his clinical team added Prezista (darunavir), Norvir (ritonavir) and Isentress (raltegravir) to the Truvada. The man's viral load dropped from an initial read of 220 to 120 a week after he started PrEP, and to below 40 about four weeks after infection. Since then, even highly sensitive tests, as well as biopsies, cannot detect HIV in his body. Researchers, who stress that this man is not considered cured or in viral remission at this time, intend to try taking him off ARVs in the coming months.

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