HIV Treatment Guidelines Revised Again

January 1, 2009 By Laura Whitehorn

In early November, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) issued changes to its guidelines for HIV treatment. Some of the major changes pertain to people just starting HIV meds, including these three notable shifts:

1. Prezista (darunavir), boosted with Norvir (ritonavir), is now listed among the “preferred” choices to include in a first HIV regimen.

2. Once-daily Kaletra (lopinavir plus ritonavir) joins the twice-daily dose on the preferred first-regimen list.

3. Epzicom (abacavir plus lamivudine) has been switched from preferred to “alternative” for those just starting HIV meds. The change reflects concerns about abacavir’s effect on heart health, as well as its reduced effectiveness for people beginning meds with high viral loads. For details, search “DHHS Major Updates” at poz.com.

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