



Inflammation Concerns

A study finds that 49 percent of serious cases of non-AIDS-defining health conditions are caused by inflammation-related disease.

April 2, 2018 By [Benjamin Ryan](#)

People on HIV treatment who have a moderately compromised immune system are at risk for serious cases of illnesses related to inflammation. Consequently, treatments that dampen inflammation may make the virus even less harmful to health than antiretrovirals (ARVs) can alone.

Researchers analyzed data regarding about 3,600 people who were on ARVs and had a viral load between 300 and 500. The participants were monitored for serious (grade 4) cases of various non-AIDS-defining health conditions and for AIDS, cardiovascular disease (CVD), non-AIDS-defining cancers (NADC) and death.

During a median follow-up of 4.3 years, 340 participants developed a grade 4 health event, for a rate of 2.3 cases per 100 cumulative years of follow-up, including 165 people who developed a grade 4 health event reflecting inflammation-related disease (for a rate of 1.1 cases per 100 cumulative years of follow-up). Grade 4 events turned out to be more common than the individual tallies for AIDS, CVD and NADC.

Forty-nine percent of grade 4 health events were those driven by inflammation-related disease, including gastroenteritis (stomach flu), cirrhosis of the liver, acute kidney failure and acute pancreatitis.

Grade 4 health events and AIDS were associated with similar risks of death.

The researchers found links between two biomarkers of inflammation and an increased risk of grade 4 health events, especially those health events resulting from inflammation-related disease.

“Our findings are relevant to research being planned to determine whether interventions that reduce inflammatory biomarkers lead to reductions in risk of conditions that are associated with higher biomarker levels,” says the study’s lead author, Brian Hart, a PhD candidate in biostatistics at the University of Minnesota.