Newer Non-Nuke HIV Meds May Allow for Lower Adherence

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Newer non-nucleoside transcriptase inhibitor (NNRTI, or non-nuke)–based antiretroviral (ARV) regimens may keep HIV viral loads suppressed when adherence levels are as low as 85 percent, aidsmap reports. Publishing their findings in the Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes, researchers from the U.S. Veteran Aging Cohort Study looked at adherence and viral suppression rates among 22,000 HIV-positive veterans between 2000 and 2010.

The study cohort provided 82,000 person-years of follow-up.

In 2001, those with less than 95 percent adherence had a 38 percent viral suppression rate. By 2010, this figure had jumped to 84 percent as newer therapies were introduced.

Among those taking NNRTI-based regimens, there was no difference in the chance of becoming virally suppressed between those with 85 to 89 percent adherence and those adhering at 95 percent or above. However, for those taking protease inhibitor–based regimens, there was a significant difference in viral suppression rates between those adhering at 95 percent or higher and those with lower adherence.

The researchers concluded that, while it is important to counsel people with HIV to strive for perfect adherence, clinicians' concerns that patients may have slightly lower than ideal adherence should not preclude these individuals from starting on the newer ARV treatments early in the course of their HIV disease.

To read the aidsmap article, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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