If CD4s Are High, A Multivitamin Combo Slows HIV Without ARVs

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A particular combination of multivitamins along with selenium slows HIV disease progression among those who are treatment naive and have a CD4 count above 350, aidsmap reports. Publishing their findings in the Journal of the American Medical Association, researchers conducted a double-blind, placebo-controlled study of 878 treatment-naive people in Botswana between 2004 and 2009.

The median CD4 count among the participants was 420 at the beginning of the study; one in three of them had CD4s above 500. All were asymptomatic, had HIV-1 subtype C and had a normal body weight.

The participants were randomized to four groups to take different daily regimens over a 24-month period. One took a placebo. The second took daily multivitamins (B vitamins and vitamins C and E). The third took just selenium. And the last took the multivitamins and selenium.

Those who took just the multivitamins or who took them along with selenium were significantly less likely to have their CD4s drop below 250. Taking both the multivitamins and selenium lowered the risk of CD4s falling below 350.

There were no adverse side effects. Ninety percent of the participants adhered very well to the regimen, taking at least 96 percent of their doses.

To read the aidsmap story, click here.

To read the study abstract, click here.

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