

Next Up?

The lowdown of what's in the pipeline

June 1, 2000 By [Tim Horn](#)

Generic Name: Tenofovir

Brand Name: To be announced

Company: Gilead Sciences

For: HIV

Class: Nucleotide analogue

Status: Phase III trials under way

Standard Treatment: Other HAART meds

Notes: Test-tube studies suggest it may be potent against 3TC-resistant strains of HIV and several other viruses. This once-daily drug looks less likely than adefovir (Gilead's first nucleotide) to damage the kidneys, but it can induce headaches, nausea and diarrhea.

From the gut of PWA Stephen Gendin: "After the debacle with adefovir (rejected by the FDA due to toxicity), Gilead has a lot riding on this one. Its early expanded access program is welcome news."

Generic Name: Calanolide-A

Brand Name: To be announced

Company: Sarawak MediChem

For: HIV

Class: NNTRI

Status: Phase II trials underway

Standard Treatment: Other HAART meds

Notes: An NNRTI—derived from a rain-forest tree—that has researchers confused: Small human studies show that it dramatically reduces viral load after a month, but has no effect for the first two weeks. No HIVers developed resistance to the drug, even as monotherapy.

From the gut of PWA Stephen Gendin: "With data this weird, I wouldn't pin hope on this drug until more trials are done. And there's no such thing as a drug that HIV can't become resistant to."

Generic Name: Valganciclovir

Brand Name: To be announced

Company: Roche Laboratories

For: CMV retinitis

Class: Antiviral

Status: Phase II trials under way

Standard Treatment: IV ganciclovir, foscarnet and cidofovir

Notes: Finally, an oral drug being developed to treat this sight-stealing virus. A 160-person trial found a longer time to retinitis relapse with valganciclovir (198 days) than with IV ganciclovir (120 days); both drugs can cause severe neutropenia (a white blood cell deficiency).

From the gut of PWA Stephen Gendin: “With CMV rates much lower since protease inhibitors came along, it’s nice to see this company is still working on improving CMV treatments.”

Generic Name: N/A

Brand Name: SB Normal Stool Formula

Company: Shaman Botanicals

For: Diarrhea

Class: Antidiarrheal

Status: On market as supplement, www.shamanbotanicals.com

Standard Treatment: Imodium-AD, Lomotil, Kaopectate, other meds

Notes: Contains a rain-forest tree-sap extract used for centuries to fight diarrhea. In trials of 500 PWAs, it improved diarrhea by reducing water flow into intestines. Many anecdotes of effectiveness against HIV med-induced runs. So far, no reported side effects.

From the gut of PWA Stephen Gendin: “It’s expensive, but does seem to work very well and is sometimes reimbursable. Definitely worth trying for a couple of weeks if you’ve got unresponsive diarrhea.”