Prevention: Vaccine Ineffective

Large trial of HIV vaccine finds it does not prevent HIV

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A large study of an experimental HIV vaccine was recently stopped after interim results showed that it is not effective. The Phase IIb/III Uhambo trial, which was launched in South Africa in 2016, enrolled more than 5,400 HIV-negative men and women. They were randomly assigned to receive a two-part vaccine regimen or a placebo administered in six injections over 18 months. An independent review of the early data showed that 129 people who received the vaccine and 123 people who received the placebo contracted HIV, indicating that the vaccine offered no protection. Two other major trials, the Phase IIb Imbokodo study and the Phase III Mosaico study, are investigating different HIV vaccine regimens, though they may be affected by the COVID-19 crisis. “An HIV vaccine is essential to end the global pandemic,” says Anthony Fauci, MD, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases. “Research continues on other approaches to a safe and effective HIV vaccine, which I still believe can be achieved.”

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