# Can Selzentry Do More Than Suppress Viral Load?

The first CCR5 inhibitor applies for a second job. We check out its résumé:

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**Selzentry (maraviroc)**
**Selzentry@AIDSmeds.com**

**Employment history:**
First oral entry inhibitor for HIV; FDA approval: August 2007

**Experience:**
Blocking HIV from attaching to CCR5, a protein on the surface of immune cells (thus preventing HIV from entering the cells). Can be used by positive people who have previously taken HIV meds; may also win FDA approval for those starting their first HIV combo.

**Additional skills:**
Boosts CD4 numbers: In trials, Selzentry seemed to raise CD4 cell counts even when it didn't suppress HIV viral load. Researchers at the University of California in San Francisco are leading a study to determine why.
Decreases inflammation: By blocking CCR5, Selzentry may curb some chronic activation of the immune system experienced by people with HIV (on its own—even without HIV—CCR5 creates various kinds of immune system activation). "If maraviroc is directly reducing inflammation," says researcher Peter Hunt, MD, "then we would conduct a larger study to see if it decreases events like heart attacks, infections and cancers."
Does not damage other functions: "There's always a concern that blocking a normal immune function might increase risk for infections and cancers," Hunt says, "but about 1 percent of Caucasians lack a functional copy of the CCR5 gene, and they don't seem to suffer these problems." So blocking CCR5 seems safe.
Works in fields other than HIV: Steven Deeks, MD, another UCSF lead researcher, says that if CCR5 blockers also reduce immune activation, they may "have a profound effect on other diseases including most of the conditions of aging."

For trial enrollment information, e-mail or call: phunt@php.ucsf.edu or sdeeks@php.ucsf.edu (415.476.4082 exts. 345 and 404).

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