



Toronto Man Cured of HIV After Stem Cell Transplant

He has undetectable HIV-specific T-cell responses, suggesting there may be no remaining virus to trigger his immune system.

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Another man appears to be free of HIV after a stem cell transplant for cancer treatment, according to a report at the Canadian Association of HIV Research Conference in April. If he remains in remission, the Toronto Patient will be the 11th person cured after the procedure.

The anonymous 62-year-old man was diagnosed with Burkitt lymphoma and AIDS in 1999. Strong chemotherapy put his cancer into remission, and he achieved viral suppression in 2000 after starting combination antiretroviral therapy. Two decades later, he developed acute myelogenous leukemia and underwent a hematopoietic stem cell transplant in 2021. Like the first person cured of HIV—Timothy Ray Brown, the Berlin Patient—his donor had two copies of a mutation known as CCR5-delta32 that prevents HIV from entering cells.

The man stopped antiretroviral treatment in July 2025, but he still has an undetectable viral load more than 10 months later using the most sensitive tests. Researchers have been unable to isolate viable virus, and HIV DNA levels in his blood cells continue to decline, indicating a shrinking viral reservoir. What's more, he has undetectable HIV-specific T-cell responses, suggesting there may be no remaining virus to trigger his immune system.

Scientists are still trying to figure out why 11 people have been cured of HIV with stem cell transplants, while other similar attempts have failed, and there does not seem to be a decisive common factor. The transplant procedure is too risky for people without life-threatening cancer, but each new case offers clues that could lead to a safer and more widely accessible functional cure.

"The small but growing number of these cases prove an HIV cure is possible," says Sharon Walmsley, MD, director of the HIV clinic at the University of Toronto's University Health Network and the man's longtime doctor. "Cases such as these provide important information for

researchers to find ways to eradicate HIV from the body.”

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