Treatment: Soybean Compound May Fight HIV

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Early research into a compound found in soybeans suggests it may be used as an anti-HIV agent that would be less susceptible to drug resistance. Called genistein, the compound is what's known as a tyrosine kinase inhibitor, which blocks communication between sensors located on the surface of a cell and its insides. HIV hijacks these sensors, causing them to instruct immune cells to change their structure so that the virus can invade. Genistein inhibits the signal that triggers this change, thus preventing HIV's entry into cells. Because the compound does not directly affect the virus, it is less likely to lead to drug resistance. Researchers anticipate that it may one day be used as a complement to antiretroviral therapy. Caution: There is no evidence to suggest that eating soy products will fight HIV.

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