Another Two-Drug HIV Regimen Shows Promise

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Treating HIV with a two-drug regimen of Norvir (ritonavir)–boosted Reyataz (atazanavir) and Epivir (lamivudine) works as well or better than a standard three-drug regimen based on boosted Reyataz, aidsmap reports. Researchers presented preliminary findings of an ongoing study of 266 people with HIV at the 15th European AIDS Conference in Barcelona.

The participants were all on treatment at the start of the study and had been taking their current antiretroviral regimen for about 29 months, with an undetectable viral load for 21 to 24 months. They were randomized to receive either boosted Norvir plus Epivir or to keep taking a three-drug regimen of boosted Reyataz plus two nucleoside/nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs or nukes).

The goal of the study is to see if the two-drug regimen is “non-inferior” to, or essentially as good as, the three-drug regimen after undergoing 96 weeks of treatment.

After 48 weeks, the two-drug regimen has proved non-inferior thus far.

Two percent of those taking two drugs experienced virologic failure, compared with 6 percent of those taking three drugs, a difference that was not statistically significant, meaning it could have occurred by chance. A respective 14 and 27 percent of those taking the two- and three-drug regimens changed treatment for any reason.

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