Going Rogue

Some positive people resort to unorthodox regimens.

March 1, 2010

HIV treatment is an individual matter. You and your doctor should assess your health and come up with the treatments—pharmacological and otherwise—that's best for you. Sometimes, though, a perfect fit is not found among the cornucopia of available HIV combos. That's when you might want to trust your instincts and develop a treatment plan that works for you. Below are three unorthodox regimens that haven't been proved effective in large clinical trials but seem to work for the individuals. The key to successful treatment is ensuring that your combo is powerful enough to suppress HIV and keep it down over time. Otherwise, while you think you are knocking out the virus, you may just be shadowboxing.

- "I've been HIV positive for 22 years. My insurance covered only the first $100 of each Rx, so from 2002 to 2003 I stopped all meds except acyclovir [the generic drug for treating herpes]. Since August 2003, my doctor has supplied me with a mono-therapy Kaletra dose. In other words: just that one boosted protease inhibitor, no other antiretrovirals (not an approved practice). My gratitude for being able to get the drug helps me remember always to take it. My CD4 count is above 900, and I've never had an HIV-related illness."

- "Because of side effects, I no longer faithfully follow my regimen. I take one dose a day instead of the two prescribed for one drug, and I skip the other drug every third day. My doctor is not crazy about this, but I've been doing it for two years and my viral load continues to be undetectable. Oddly enough, my CD4 count has gone over 600 on my last two blood tests—the first time I've been above 600 since contracting HIV."

- "I was having severe side effects, including debilitating buffalo hump and facial wasting. Since my drugs all last long in my bloodstream, I decided missing a day would not be dangerous. So

for 10 years I have skipped Wednesday and Saturday doses, taking the other doses on time without fail. My hump and other symptoms have receded. My CD4s have gone from the 300s to the 600s, and my viral load has remained undetectable. Having two drug ‘holidays’ a week helps me continue my regimen.”

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/unorthodox-hiv-treatment-17998-9537