Barebacking CD4 Cells

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Some interesting new research indicates that direct CD4 cell to CD4 cell contact might be a leading method by which HIV infects these immune system cells.

Scientists have known for years that CD4 cells can be directly infected by free-floating HIV particles in the blood, and have taken pretty pictures of this viral attack (to see one, click here). Treatments called entry inhibitors (like Fuzeon and Selzentry) effectively block this attack.

But now a team of scientists from UC Davis and Mount Sinai School of Medicine have actually filmed CD4 cells directly infecting other CD4 cells, and speculate that this might be "the predominant mode of [HIV] dissemination."

Why is this important? It might explain why HIV is able to elude many of the vaccines tested thus far (direct cell-to-cell infection avoids those pesky, free-floating antibodies). And it might lead to new treatments as well by defining a viral pathway which researchers can try to block.

The study was made possible after experts inserted a protein into HIV's genetic code which glows green when exposed to blue light. Check it out...

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/barebacking-cd4-cell