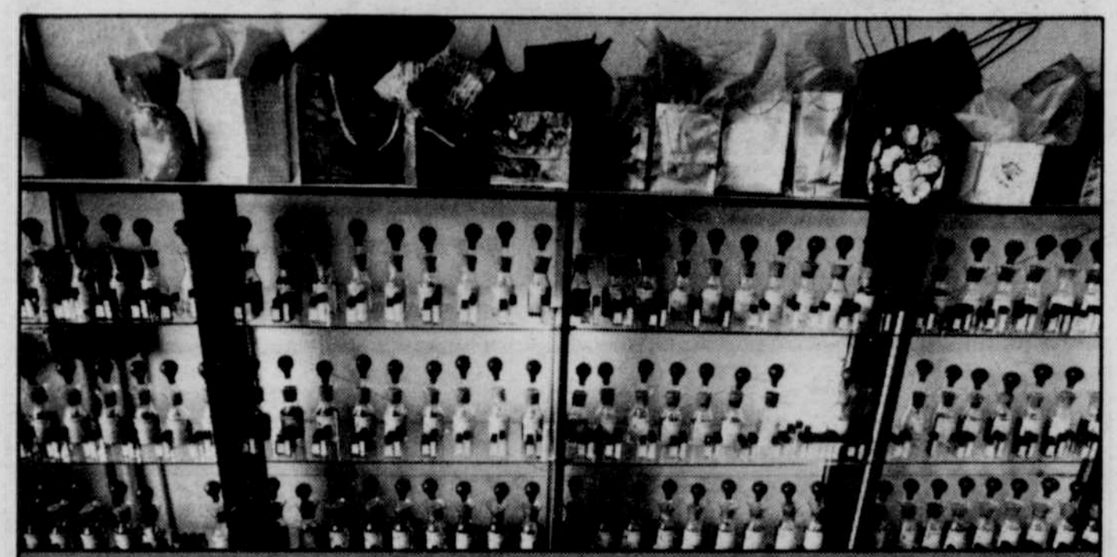
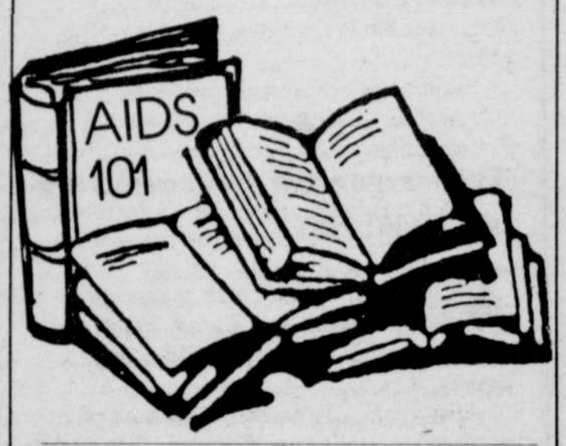


AZT and Interferon-alpha for KS

Gay men with Kaposi's sarcoma benefit from a combination of AZT and interferon-alpha, say doctors at the National Institutes of Health. This combination of drugs reduced the size of tumors for 11 out of 22 PWAs, and the amount of HIV decreased for eight out of 22 PWAs. However, this drug combination also increased the frequency of side effects. Doctors at the NIH recommend that PWAs with Kaposi's sarcoma receive long-term therapy with AZT (100 mg every four hours) and interferon-alpha (5-10 million units).

Reference: J. Kovacs and others. "Combined Zidovudine and Interferon-alpha Therapy in Patients with Kaposi Sarcoma and AIDS." Annals of Internal Medicine, *August 15, 1989, pp: 280-87.*



BY JEFFREY ZURLINDEN

Antibodies may speed infection

Scientists question whether certain antibodies to HIV actually help the virus to infect new cells. These enhancing antibodies may allow HIV to enter white blood cells that have few of the usual entry sites for HIV. Enhancing antibodies may temporarily increase the rate of infection of new cells by tenfold. Before vaccines can be tested, researchers plan to fully identify the effects of enhancing antibodies.

Reference: D. Bolognesi. "Do Antibodies Enhance the Infection of Cells by HIV." Nature, *August 10, 1989, pp: 431-32.*

New testing begins for AIDS drug

Immunoadhesin, a new drug to fight HIV, began testing last month. This new form of soluble r-CD4 combines the part of the T-cell that attaches to HIV with an antibody that activates killer cells to attack HIV. In total, 30-40 people will receive this experimental drug. Scientists hope that immunoadhesin will find HIV-infected cells and activate the infected person's immune system to kill HIV. These initial clinical trials will be conducted by the U.S. National Cancer Institute, New England Deaconess Hospital, San Francisco General Hospital, the University of Washington, and Stanford University.

Reference: C. Ezzell. "AIDS Closer to Becoming a Treatable Disease." Nature, *August 24, 1989, p: 581.*

New AZT studies

Dr. Anthony Fauci announced in August that AZT benefits otherwise healthy people who are infected with HIV, but little was said about the studies that led to the recommendations. These recommendations are based on a two-year study of 3,200 people — one-third of whom received low doses of AZT (500 mg daily), one-third who received high doses of AZT (1,500 mg daily), and the remaining third who received placebo (no AZT). Among the people taking placebo, 38 progressed to AIDS or severe ARC. Only 17 who received low doses of AZT and 19 who received high doses of AZT progressed to AIDS or ARC. The researchers concluded that low doses of AZT (500 mg daily) delay the onset of ARC and AIDS among people with fewer than 500 helper T-cells. Although AZT can cause severe side effects in PWAs, only 3 percent of the healthy HIV-infected people in this study developed side effects. These people reported only mild side effects — usually limited to nausea. The study will continue to determine if people with more than 500 helper T-cells also benefit from AZT.

Reference: J. Marx. "Wider Use of AIDS Drugs Advocated." Science, *August 25, 1989, p: 811.*

Few cases of HIV-2 in United States

So far the CDC has reported only six people in the United States who are infected with HIV-2, a close relative of HIV-1 that also leads to AIDS. All six people immigrated from Africa. HIV-2 is probably spread in the same way as HIV-1, and the CDC recommends the same precautions to prevent infection with either virus.

Reference: CDC, "Update: HIV-2 Infection–U.S." MMWR, *August 25, 1989, pp: 572-80.*