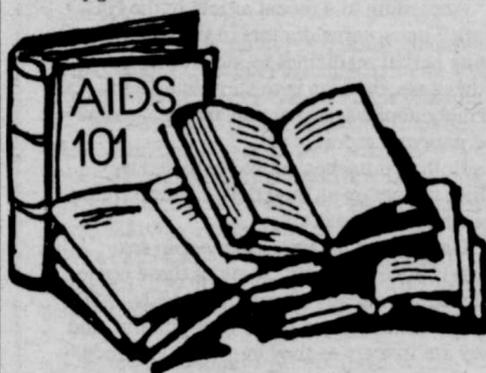


## Men with low T-cells need medicine to fight PCP

Gay men with fewer than 200 helper T-cells need medicine to prevent Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia, PCP, even if these men are otherwise healthy, say researchers from the Multi-Center AIDS Cohort Study. In addition, men with more than 200 T-cells need medicine to prevent PCP if they also have thrush, fever, night sweats, weight loss, or other symptoms of HIV infection. These doctors reached their conclusions after studying over 5,000 gay men for over four years. Otherwise healthy men with more than 200 T-cells rarely got PCP. The doctors recommend that gay men infected with HIV have T-cell tests done every six months. Men who have T-cells that drop below 200 should take medicine to prevent PCP. The CDC recommends either monthly aerosolized Pentamidine treatments or daily oral medication to help prevent PCP.

Reference: J. Phair and others. *The risk of PCP among men infected with HIV-1. The New England Journal of Medicine. Jan. 18, 1990, pg: 161-63.*



BY JEFFREY ZURLINDEN

## KS may be sexually transmitted

Kaposi's sarcoma, or KS, may be caused by a virus or another kind of germ that is passed from person to person during sex, say doctors at the Centers for Disease Control. Although they have not identified the germ that they believe causes KS, these doctors think the statistics offer proof. Until the AIDS epidemic, KS was rare. Today approximately 15 percent of people with AIDS have KS, but gay men are more likely than IV-drug users to have KS. Gay men in California and New York are also more likely to have KS than are men who live in the midwest. In addition, the percentage of gay men with AIDS who have KS has decreased since the beginning of the epidemic. Since the epidemic began, many more gay men — even men who are infected with HIV — use condoms. Condoms and other safe-sex practices may prevent the spread of the germ that causes KS in people who are already infected with HIV.

Reference: V. Beral and others. *Kaposi's sarcoma among persons with AIDS: a sexually transmitted disease? Lancet. Jan. 20, 1990, pg: 123-27*

## Recombinant CD4 shows promise

Six men with AIDS received daily injections of a new drug called recombinant soluble CD4 also known as rsCD4. After 28

days, four of the six men no longer had HIV cultured from their blood; and five of the six men had lower blood levels of p24 — a sign that less of the HIV was reproducing. Although these early results show promise, it is too soon to know whether rsCD4 decreases the likelihood of developing an opportunistic infection.

Reference: R. Gerety and others. *Human recombinant soluble CD4 therapy. Lancet. Dec. 23/30, 1989, pg: 1521.*

## Recombinant CD4 prevents infection

In laboratory experiments, a new drug called recombinant soluble CD4 or rsCD4 prevented HIV from infecting two kinds of white blood cells called monocytes and macrophages. These two kinds of white blood cells can harbor HIV and lead to further infection of T-cells. RsCD4 also prevented HIV inside of monocytes and macrophages from spreading to T-cells. RsCD4 is an artificial form of the handle where HIV attaches to T-cells and other kinds of white blood cells. RsCD4 works by fooling HIV into attaching to rsCD4 rather than the real CD4 on the surface of T-cells, monocytes and macrophages.

Reference: M. Harbison and others. *Effects of recombinant soluble CD4 on HIV-1 infection of monocyte/macrophages. Journal of Infectious Diseases. Jan. 1990, pg: 1-5.*

## HIV hinge may explain infection

Scientists in England may have discovered the key that allows HIV to attach to and infect fresh cells. According to these researchers, the piece of HIV that glues to a T-cell must first break into a hinge to fit into that T-cell. In order to make a hinge, HIV uses a substance called protease. Drugs called protease inhibitors could stop HIV from making hinges and could prevent HIV from infecting fresh cells.

Reference: P. Stephens and others. *A chink in HIV's armour? Nature. Jan. 18, 1990, pg: 219.*

## New substance prevents HIV from multiplying

In test-tube experiments, substances known as protease inhibitors prevented HIV from reproducing and infecting fresh cells. To multiply, HIV must first divide large pieces of virus into small building blocks that are rearranged into packages that infect fresh cells. A substance called protease chops the immature large pieces into mature small pieces. Protease inhibitors, in turn, prevent protease from working, thus protease inhibitors prevent HIV from maturing into a form that can infect new cells. These scientists have found two powerful substances that block protease. They hope that these new protease inhibitors will not harm healthy cells and may eventually be used to treat people who are infected with HIV.

Reference: T. Meek and others. *Inhibition of HIV-1 protease in infected T-lymphocytes by synthetic peptide analogues. Nature. Jan. 4, 1990, pg: 90-92.*

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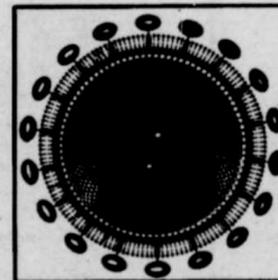
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