

New injection reduces risk of HIV infection by 96%: All about it

A new HIV prevention method, Lenacapavir, administered as a twice-yearly injection, has demonstrated superior results compared to daily oral medications.

Twice-yearly injection of the drug Lenacapavir has shown groundbreaking results in HIV treatment.

A new HIV prevention method of injecting the drug called Lenacapavir just twice a year has shown groundbreaking results, better than daily oral medications.

In a clinical trial called Purpose-2, led by Emory University and Grady Health System, the injectable reduced the risk of HIV infection by 96%. This discovery could change the landscape of HIV prevention, particularly for people who struggle to adhere to daily medication routines.

Currently, oral medications like Truvada, [part of a regimen called PrEP](#) (pre-exposure prophylaxis), are highly effective but require daily intake. Missing doses can drastically reduce their effectiveness.

"What we see is that about half of people stop taking daily oral PrEP within a year due to various reasons," said Dr. Colleen Kelley, the study's lead author and professor at Emory University.

The Phase III trial enrolled 2,179 participants for Lenacapavir and 1,086 for Truvada across 88 sites globally. Results showed only two new HIV infections in the Lenacapavir group compared to nine in the Truvada group.

Dr. Kelley emphasised that the injectable's long-lasting protection and ease of use could make it a game-changer, especially for populations disproportionately affected by HIV, such as Black and Hispanic individuals, cisgender gay men, and others with limited access to healthcare.

Dr. Valeria Cantos, another investigator, highlighted the study's commitment to diversity. The trial included participants from the US, South America, Africa, and Asia, with materials and staff accommodating diverse languages and cultures.

This approach, [published in The New England Journal of Medicine](#), was particularly impactful at Grady Memorial Hospital, which serves underserved populations.

Lenacapavir's potential approval, expected by 2025, marks a significant step forward in HIV prevention. Experts like Dr. Carlos del Rio of Emory University stress the importance of equitable access to such innovations.

"Long-acting antiretrovirals like Lenacapavir could dramatically reduce HIV infections if made widely available," he said.

In a previous double-blind study, in women and adolescent girls in Africa, Lenacapavir proved to be 100% effective against the deadly HIV.

But despite the drug's high effectiveness and easy convenience over traditional methods of medication, its high cost of \$40,000 per person annually is a barrier.

In [October](#), Indian pharmaceutical companies, including Dr. Reddy's Laboratories and Emcure Pharmaceuticals, will produce generic versions of Lenacapavir under non-exclusive agreements with Gilead Sciences, the manufacturer of the new HIV drug.

These deals now allow the companies to manufacture and supply Lenacapavir to 120 resource-limited countries with pending regulatory approvals.

This will help ensure faster access to the drug in low-income nations with high HIV rates.

News Source:

<https://www.indiatoday.in/health/story/new-injection-lenacapavir-reduces-risk-of-hiv-infection-by-96-percent-all-about-it-2644335-2024-12-03>