# Hep C Activists Petition for Combination Tablet Trials

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Led by activist Margaret Dudley, people with the hepatitis C virus are petitioning two competing drug companies to work together in developing a fixed-dose combination tablet containing two promising direct acting antivirals, Kens 5 News reports.

When used together, Gilead Sciences' nucleotide analog GS-7977 and Bristol-Myers Squibb's NS5a inhibitor daclatasvir have shown very strong efficacy. In early clinical trials, the combination therapy cured 100 percent of all patients with hepatitis C genotype 1 without the need for pegylated interferon.

Gilead and Bristol-Myers Squibb have thus far been unwilling to develop a tablet containing both drugs, which would simplify their use once approved. Both companies have invested millions of dollars into research on these drugs and appear disinterested in an alliance that might dilute their profits.

The online petition, which urges the two companies to put patient health ahead of profits, currently has close to 4,000 signatures. Dudley hopes to reach 100,000 signatures by July 28—World Hepatitis Day—to pressure the companies to continue clinical trials for this combination therapy.

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http://beta.docker.hepmag.com/article/HepC-Combination-Petition-22661-104705695