HIV No Longer Holds Down Hep C Cure Rates

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Recent trials of the current crop of hepatitis C virus (HCV) medications have brought more good news for those who are coinfected with HCV and HIV, showing hep C cure rates comparably high to those seen in studies including people who only have HCV.

In one study, Gilead Sciences' Harvoni (ledipasvir/sofosbuvir) cured hep C in 96 percent of 335 coinfected participants.

AbbVie's Viekira Pak (ombitasvir/paritaprevir/ritonavir; dasabuvir) cured 92 percent of 63 coinfected people in another trial.

In a study of Bristol-Myers Squibb's Daklinza (daclatasvir) and Gilead's Sovaldi (sofosbuvir), 97 percent of the coinfected participants were cured. The hep C regimen did not negatively affect HIV treatment.

As of press time, Merck was expecting to receive word in January 2016 from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration about its application for approval of the single-tablet HCV treatment grazoprevir/elbasvir. A recent study saw a 95 percent cure rate among 218 coinfected people who hadn't received hep C treatment before.

Hailing all of these study results as great news for those coinfected with HIV and HCV, Daniel Fierer, MD, an infectious disease specialist at Mount Sinai Hospital in New York City, says the next major goal is an effective regimen, like Gilead's Sovaldi/velpatasivr, that effectively battles all six major genotypes of hep C. (Recent studies of that investigational combo did not include those coinfected with HIV, however.)

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