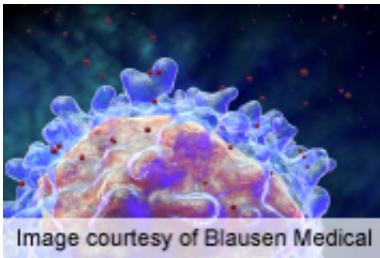


Syphilis cuts CD4 counts, ups viral load in HIV-infected men

July 26 2012



Syphilis is associated with a transient decrease in the CD4 cell count and with an increase in viral load in HIV-infected men, according to a study published online July 23 in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

(HealthDay) -- Syphilis is associated with a transient decrease in the CD4 cell count and with an increase in viral load (VL) in HIV-infected men, according to a study published online July 23 in the *Archives of Internal Medicine*.

To examine the effect of early syphilis on plasma HIV-1 RNA levels and CD4 cell counts, Witold Jarzebowski, M.D., from the Assistance Publique-Hôpitaux de Paris, and colleagues analyzed data from 282 HIV-1-infected men diagnosed as having incident primary or secondary syphilis and 1,233 syphilis-free men matched for age, sexual orientation, participating center, follow-up duration, and immunologic and virologic status before the date of syphilis diagnosis (index date).

The researchers observed an increase in VL in 27.3 percent of men with syphilis and in 16.6 percent of syphilis-free men during the six months after the index date (adjusted odds ratio [aOR], 1.87). Syphilis was associated with a higher risk of VL increase even in men with a VL of

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