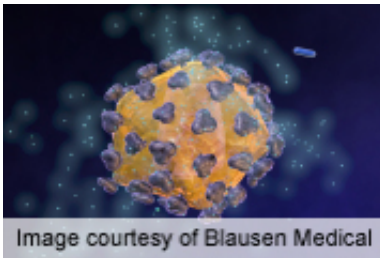


Protease inhibitor and NRTIs safe, effective in HIV treatment

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(HealthDay)—An HIV treatment regimen of a boosted protease inhibitor (lopinavir) combined with nucleoside reverse-transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs) is safe and effective in low-resource settings, according to a study published in the July 17 issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

Nicholas I. Paton, M.D., from University College London, and colleagues conducted an open-label trial in sub-Saharan Africa involving 1,277 HIV-infected adults and adolescents with first-line treatment failure. Participants were randomized to receive a ritonavir-boosted protease inhibitor (lopinavir-ritonavir) plus clinician-selected NRTIs (NRTI group; 426 patients); a protease inhibitor plus raltegravir (raltegravir group; 433 patients); or protease-inhibitor monotherapy after 12 weeks of induction therapy with raltegravir (monotherapy group; 418 patients).

The researchers found that good disease control was achieved in 60 percent of the NRTI group, 64 percent of the raltegravir group ($P = 0.21$ versus the NRTI group; superiority of raltegravir not shown), and 55 percent of the monotherapy group (noninferiority of monotherapy not shown). Rates of adverse events (grade 3 or 4) were similar among the groups ($P = 0.82$). In the NRTI group, viral load

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