HIV News

25th anniversary in June, news reports confirmed its genealogy, updated today's treatments and raised hopes for tomorrow

August 22, 2006 By Laura Whitehorn

PAST: Scientists have located proof of HIV's origins in Central African forest chimpanzees. Previously, the monkey version of HIV had been found only in captive chimps. The discovery may silence rumors that HIV is man-made.

PRESENT: In July, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the first one-pill, once-a-day HIV combo. The tablet, called Atripla, contains three already approved drugs (Sustiva, Viread and Emtriva), simplifying pill taking for many with HIV. Meanwhile, studies show that up to 16% of those newly diagnosed with HIV in the U.S. contract HIV that can resist some drugs. Government guidelines now recommend a resistance test for all positive people before starting meds. (Get the guidelines at aidsinfo.nih.gov/-guidelines; 800.448.0440; AIDSinfo, Box 6303, Rockville, MD 20849.)

FUTURE: PA-457, the first drug in the brand-new HIV med class maturation inhibitors, began large human trials in June; it had worked well in earlier tests. Maturation inhibitors stop HIV from forming a protein coat that lets it infect cells. PA-457 could be available in a few years.

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