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16th International AIDS Conference

Toronto, Canada - August 13 - 18, 2006

MICRONUTRIENT SUPPLEMENTATION INCREASES CD4 COUNT IN HIV-INFECTED INDIVIDUALS ON HAART: A PROSPECTIVE, DOUBLE-BLINDED, PLACEBO-CONTROLLED TRIAL

Int Conf AIDS. 2006 Aug 13-18;16 Abstract No. MoAb0402

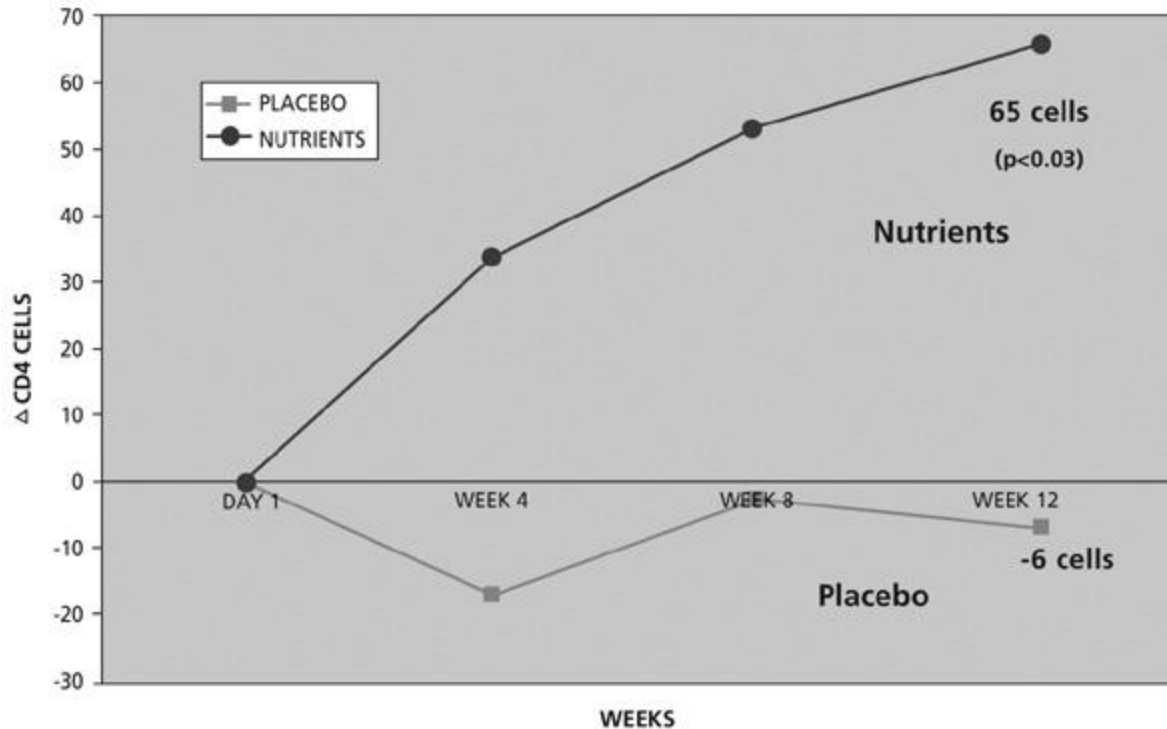
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BACKGROUND: This is a prospective, randomized, double-blinded, placebo-controlled trial designed to examine the immunologic, metabolic, and clinical effects of a micronutrient supplement in HIV-infected patients currently taking highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART).

METHODS: Forty HIV-infected patients taking a stavudine and/or didanosine-based HAART regimen were prospectively randomized to receive micronutrients or placebo twice daily for 12-weeks. Data was collected at 4-week intervals including immunologic, metabolic, and clinical measurements. Endpoints included measuring the micronutrient's effect on several immunologic, metabolic, and clinical parameters, as well as on the symptom of distal symmetrical polyneuropathy (DSP).

RESULTS: The mean absolute CD4 count rose by an average of 65 cells in the micronutrient group versus a 6 cell decline in the placebo group at 12-weeks (P=0.029 ITT). The absolute CD4 count rose by an average of 24% in the micronutrient group versus a 0% change in the placebo group (P=0.01 ITT). Peripheral neuropathy symptoms also declined to a greater extent in the micronutrient than placebo groups though this difference was not statistically significant at 12-weeks. Fasting serum glucose, insulin, and lipids were not adversely affected in the patients taking the micronutrients.



[Mean Change in CD4 Cells]

CONCLUSIONS: Micronutrient supplementation can significantly improve CD4 cell count reconstitution in HIV-infected patients taking HAART. The micronutrient supplement tested was well-tolerated and may hold promise as an adjuvant therapy in the treatment of HIV. Further investigation is warranted.

2006-08-13
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