Can HIV be removed with ‘molecular scissors’?

German scientists have used a genetic modification technique to cut HIV out of infected cells in mice. Could this eventually lead to a cure for the deadly virus?

A team of researchers at the Dresden University of Technology say they managed to create an enzyme that can identify a sequence of the virus and remove it with 90 % accuracy, according to *The Local*. The enzyme, sometimes referred to as “molecular scissors,” inserts itself into the DNA double helix and then cuts it up and rearranges it in a new, HIV-free pattern.

“The amount of virus was clearly reduced, and even no longer to be found in the blood,” said Professor Joachim Hauber, of Heinrich Pette Institute in Hamburg. Hauber said it is the only method to actually remove an HIV infection.

“There are various methods and similar approaches, but removing the virus from infected cells is unique,” Hauber said.

Read the full, original story: HIV removed from mouse cells with enzyme: report

Additional Resources:

- Researchers hammering away at a chink in HIV’s armor, Scientist
- Setback for stem cell HIV “cure”, Bloomberg