

First clinical trial of CRISPR cure for HIV is encouraging — but comes with scant details

Excision BioTherapeutics is one of [several groups](#) exploring the use of the gene-editing technology [CRISPR](#) to outright [cure HIV](#), freeing people from a lifetime of [antiretroviral therapy, or] ART.

Their treatment, EBT-101, instructs a CRISPR system to hunt down the HIV hiding in a person's cells and make three cuts to the HIV genome. Those cuts are designed to break the genetic recipe for the virus and eliminate any possibility of it reemerging.

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On October 25, 2023, they shared the first data from the trial at the European Society for Gene & Cell Therapy's annual meeting in Brussels, Belgium — but missing from the announcement was any data about whether the therapy worked.

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While the primary purpose of the trial is to test the safety and tolerability of the CRISPR therapy, the researchers also planned to have “all eligible participants” stop taking ART 12 weeks after receiving EBT-101 to see if their HIV rebounded. (The therapy would be restarted again if it did reemerge.)

It's not clear what makes a trial participant eligible, but at least one of the patients received the CRISPR therapy [more than a year ago](#).

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