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Scientists and Health Care Workers  
Committed to HIV/AIDS

## 8th International AIDS Conference

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### HIV-related fatigue and hyperbaric oxygen therapy.

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**OBJECTIVES:** Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy was evaluated to determine its effectiveness in relieving HIV-related fatigue and its effect on immune function.

**METHODS:** 16 pts. with 500 CD4 cells or less, with complaint of fatigue, and without opportunistic infections which might compromise pulmonary or neurologic function, were enrolled over 18 months. 11 pts. received 100% oxygen at 2 ATA for 90 minutes, 3x/wk; 5 pts. received surface air at the same parameters for 2 wks. to control for placebo effect, then received 100% oxygen; all were treated simultaneously in the chamber. Laboratory, clinical examinations, and Karnofsky Performance Scores were completed bi-weekly on all pts.

**RESULTS:** All pts. indicated relief from fatigue within 2 wks. Karnofsky scores improved 10-30% within 1 month. Weights for all pts. remained stable or increased; CD4 and H/H remained stable or increased. Tumor Necrosis Factor decreased in 13/16 pts. (3 had no baseline data), and 14/16 pts. had no clinical progression of disease (80% enrolled have 50 CD4 cells or less).

**CONCLUSION:** Hyperbaric Oxygen Therapy may be effective in relieving HIV-related fatigue and improving the quality of life in pts. with HIV/AIDS by inhibiting the production of certain cytokines, such as Tumor Necrosis Factor. In the medical management of HIV/AIDS, this therapy, which is non-invasive, may reduce hospital-related costs by reducing the need for and frequency of hospitalizations. The study is ongoing and research is warranted in view of these encouraging results.

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**Keywords:** AEGIS, HIV, Hyperbaric Oxygenation, Fatigue, Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome, HIV Infections, Anti-HIV Agents, HIV-1, Antigens, CD4, Oxygen, ICA8

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