

Headline	HIV cured in baby for the first time Scientists		
MediaTitle	Malay Mail		
Date	05 Mar 2013	Color	Black/white
Section	World	Circulation	20,816
Page No	L-35	Readership	49,000
Language	English	ArticleSize	110 cm ²
Journalist	N/A	AdValue	RM 914
Frequency	Daily	PR Value	RM 2,742



HIV cured in baby for the first time: Scientists

RESEARCHERS said Sunday they had, for the first time, cured a baby born with HIV — a development that could help improve treatment of babies infected at birth.

There is an important technical nuance: researchers insist on calling it a “functional cure” rather than a complete cure.

That is because the virus is not totally eradicated. Still, its presence is reduced to such a low level that a body can control it without the need for standard drug treatment.

The only fully cured AIDS patient recognised worldwide is the so-called “Berlin patient,” American Timothy Brown.

He is considered cured of HIV and leukemia five years after receiving bone marrow transplants from a rare donor naturally resistant to HIV. The marrow transplant was aimed at

treating his leukemia.

But in this new case, the baby girl received nothing more invasive or complex than commonly available antiretroviral drugs. The difference, however, was the dosage and the timing: starting less than 30 hours after her birth.

It is that kind of aggressive treatment that likely yielded the “functional cure,” researchers reported at the 20th annual Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections (CROI) in Atlanta, Georgia.

What researchers call dormant HIV-infected cells often re-start infections in HIV-infected patients within a few weeks after antiretroviral treatment stops, forcing most people who have tested HIV-positive to stay on the drugs for life or risk the illness progressing.

It appears to be the first time this was achieved in a baby, she said. — AFP