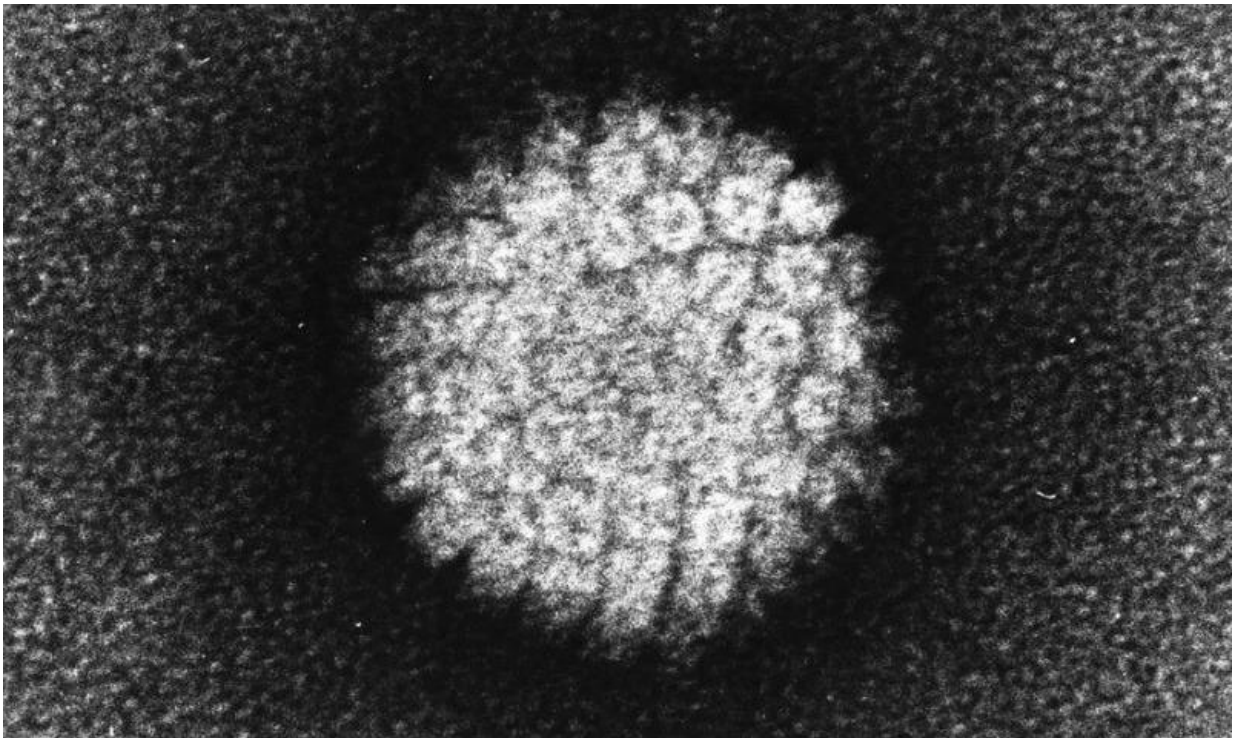


New treatment option shows promise in clearing HPV infection

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Electron micrograph of a negatively stained human papilloma virus (HPV) which occurs in human warts. Credit: public domain

Daily use of a mushroom extract supported the immune system in clearing human papillomavirus (HPV) infections, according to researchers with UTHealth Houston. The study was published today in *Frontiers in Oncology*.

The randomized, double-blind, placebo-controlled Phase II study was supported by a grant from the National Institutes of Health (1R03CA212935).

"Our results show that AHCC supplementation may help most patients eliminate their HPV infection and may decrease the long-term risk of HPV-related cancers," said Judith A. Smith, PharmD, lead researcher on the study and professor in the Department of Obstetrics, Gynecology and Reproductive Sciences at McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston. "Through this study, as well as multiple other studies, our research has shown that the AHCC supplement is safe."

AHCC (active hexose correlated compound) is a proprietary mushroom extract.

The study focused on women with a minimum two-year history of persistent high-risk HPV. Patients in the treatment group received the supplement AHCC for six months, followed by six months of a placebo. Patients in the placebo group received a placebo for 12 months. The study found that 14 of 22 patients (63.6%) in the treatment arm became HPV-negative.

HPV is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there were about 43 million HPV infections in 2018, many among people in their late teens and early 20s. HPV infections can cause health problems, including genital warts and cancers. However, HPV vaccines can help eliminate infection and side effects.

"We have no other effective treatment for persistent HPV infections other than watchful waiting. While AHCC supplementation may not help everyone, it is readily available today for patients to ask their clinicians about using to support their immune system in clearing persistent HPV

infections," Smith said.

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Provided by University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston

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