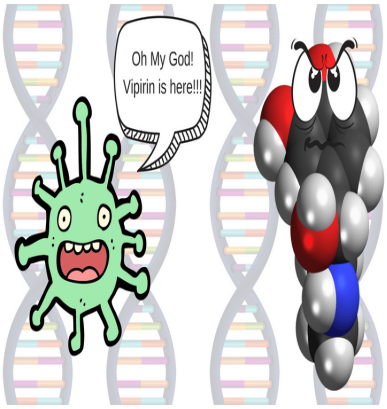


Description

Scientists have always found diseases caused by viruses difficult to diagnose and treat. One of the major reasons is that the replication mechanism of viruses is difficult to control. Several antiviral drugs have been invented to treat viral diseases. Scientists have now published a study in *Nature* describing an enzyme synthesized within the human body that can control the replication of viruses. The enzyme, viperin, facilitates a reaction that produces a specific molecule known as “ddhCTP.” This molecule prevents viruses from copying their genetic material and thus from multiplying. Interestingly, ddhCTP mimics nucleotide-building blocks and gets incorporated into the RNA genome. This, in turn, prevents RNA polymerase from adding more nucleotides to the strand. This discovery would allow researchers to develop a drug that induces the human body to produce ddhCTP. This finding could be used to develop broad-spectrum therapies for a range of viral diseases.

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Category

1. Checklist

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