

Dr. Borgdorff Replies

TO THE EDITOR:

The papers of Gormus, *et al.* (3) and Baskin, *et al.* (1) suggest that SIV infection increases the risk for the development of leprosy in experimentally inoculated rhesus monkeys, although their results were not statistically significant (3/5 SIV-infected and 6/29 non-SIV-infected monkeys developed leprosy; Fisher's exact test $p > 0.05$). The papers by Pönnighaus, *et al.* (4) and Borgdorff, *et al.* (2), on the other hand, aimed at estimating the risk of HIV-1 infection for the development of leprosy in humans.

Once cannot simply extrapolate statements on SIV in rhesus monkeys to those

on HIV-1 in humans. However, if both SIV in rhesus monkeys and HIV-1 in humans increase the risk for developing leprosy (as some, although not all, of the evidence suggests), the former may be a good model for the latter.

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