DO ARV DRUGS SAVE OR EXTEND LIVES?

Nearly everyone thinks that ARVs save or at least extend a bit the lives of people doomed to die, doctors say, because they've reacted positively to an 'HIV antibody' test. But no pharmaceutical corporation manufacturing and selling these drugs claims this. That's because there's no good evidence that they do. For instance, AZT manufacturer GlaxoSmithKline says frankly about its new state-of-the-art ARV Ziagen in its 'Product Information': 'Ziagen has not been studied long enough to know if it will help you live longer or have fewer of the medical problems that are associated with HIV infection or AIDS.' About Combivir, a combination of its drugs AZT and the chemically similar compound 3TC, GlaxoSmithKline concedes: 'COMBIVIR is not a cure for HIV infection and patients may continue to experience illnesses associated with HIV infection, including opportunistic infections.' Boehringer Ingelheim says about nevirapine: 'VIRAMUNE does not cure HIV or AIDS, and it is not known if it will help you live longer with HIV. People taking VIRAMUNE may still get infections common in people with HIV (opportunistic infections).' Merck is no more encouraging about its protease inhibitor drug in its package insert: 'It is not known whether Crixivan will extend your life or reduce your chances of getting other illnesses associated with HIV.' Gilead Sciences is equally pessimistic about its drug tenofovir: 'VIREAD does not cure HIV-1 infection or AIDS. The long-term effects of VIREAD are not known at this time. People taking VIREAD may still get opportunistic infections or other conditions that happen with HIV-1 infection. Opportunistic infections are infections that develop because the immune system is weak. Some of these conditions are pneumonia, herpes virus infections, and Mycobacterium avium complex (MAC) infections.'