What is PrEP?

PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis. The word "prophylaxis" means to prevent or control the spread of an infection or disease. PrEP is a medication that HIV-negative individuals can take to prevent contracting HIV through sex or injection drug use. When taken correctly, PrEP medications are highly effective at preventing an HIV-negative person from contracting HIV. In several studies, the chance of getting HIV from sex was 99% lower for those taking PrEP compared to those who weren't.

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Attention: Language assistance services, free of charge, are available to you. Call 1-800-556-0689, TTY 711. ATENCIÓN: si habla español, tiene a su disposición servicios gratuitos de asistencia lingüística. Llame al 1-800-556-0689, TTY 711. 请注意：您可以免费获得语言协助服务和其他辅助服务。请致电 1-800-556-0689, TTY 711.

PrEP, PEP, AND Sexual Health

COMMON QUESTIONS AND INFORMATION

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What is PEP?

PEP stands for Post-Exposure Prophylaxis, which means taking medication to prevent HIV transmission after a possible exposure. PEP must be started within 72 hours of the possible exposure to HIV (i.e., about 3 days). The sooner you start, the better - every hour counts. If you're prescribed PEP, you will need to take it for 28 days. You can access PEP through your primary care provider if they are open and available at the point that it's needed. If you are not able to get in touch with your PCP quickly enough, you can access PEP through the following methods:

- **PEP HOTLINE** (NYC): 844-3-PEPNYC (844-373-7692)
- **PEP HOTLINE** (Outside of NYC): 844-PEP4NOW (844-737-4669)
- **NYS PROVIDER DIRECTORY:** providerdirectory.aidsinstituteny.org

PrEP or PEP do not protect against other STIs

Common Questions About PrEP & PEP

What Forms of PrEP Are Available?

There are four forms of PrEP available: two are pills that can be taken once daily, or one can be taken on demand in special circumstances; the third and fourth are long-acting, injectable medications.

- **TRUVADA** (emtricitabine/tenofovir df) is an oral pill approved for all people at risk of HIV. It can be taken once daily or in certain circumstances "on demand."
- **DESCOVY** (emtricitabine/tenofovir af) is a daily oral pill approved for sexually active men and transgender women at risk of contracting HIV through sex or injection drug use. Descovy has not been studied for HIV prevention in people assigned female at birth.
- **APRETUDE** (cabotegravir) is a long-acting, injectable form of PrEP. It is an intramuscular injection administered every 2 months by a health care provider. It is a good option for anybody who struggles to take once-daily pills, is concerned about side effects from oral PrEP, or prefers long-acting, injectable medications.

PrEP On Demand (2-1-1)

2 pills, **2-20** hours before sex
→ **1** pill, 24 hours after sex
→ **1** pill, 48 hours after sex

- **YEZTUGO** (lenacapavir) is a long-acting injectable form of PrEP approved for adults and adolescents. It requires two initial injections and pills over 2 days, followed by an injection every 6 months.

Can You Explain Long-Acting, Injectable PrEP?

Apretude and Yeztugo are the two approved long-acting injectable forms of PrEP. Apretude is administered by a health care provider every two months in the form of an intramuscular injection to the buttock. Individuals taking Apretude need to see their PCP every two months. Yeztugo is administered by a health care provider every six months in the form of two subcutaneous injections to the stomach area or upper thigh. Apretude and Yeztugo are good options for anybody who struggles to take once-daily pills.

What is PrEP On Demand?

PrEP On Demand refers to taking PrEP only in preparation for planned sexual encounters, via the "2-1-1" method. This means taking two pills 2-24 hours before sex; one pill 24 hours after the first dose, and one pill 24 hours after the second dose. PrEP On Demand might be preferred by individuals who only engage in infrequent, planned sexual encounters. PrEP On Demand does require advanced planning and is not a reliable prevention method for spontaneous sexual encounters. It has only been studied in cisgender men engaging in anal sex with other cisgender men. It has not been studied in people assigned female at birth, people taking estrogens, or for vaginal sex.

What is Doxy-PEP?

Doxy-PEP refers to taking the antibiotic doxycycline after sex to reduce your chance of acquiring syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia by about two-thirds. Two 100-mg pills of doxycycline should be taken ideally within 24 hours, but no later than 72 hours, after condomless sex. Doxy-PEP is not effective for vaginal sex.

Doxycycline is an antibiotic, so Doxy-PEP only helps prevent bacterial STIs like gonorrhea, chlamydia, and syphilis. It does not protect against HIV, mpox, herpes, or other viral infections. It is not the same medication used for HIV PEP, and the two are not interchangeable. To access Doxy-PEP, talk to your PCP or go to a New York City Sexual Health Clinic.

DoxyPEP

Within **3** days after sex
→ take **2** pills, **1** time

Are There Any Side Effects to Using PrEP?

PrEP is generally well tolerated. Side effects can occur for some individuals. Minor side effects of oral PrEP like nausea usually go away on their own after a few weeks. People experiencing persistent side effects from one form of PrEP can switch to another.

- **TRUVADA** comes with a risk of kidney impairment and bone mineral density loss. All patients taking Truvada will get blood taken every three months to check for HIV and other STIs and to monitor any potential side effects before they have the chance to become severe.
- **DESCOVY** is similar to Truvada but has a significantly lower risk of side effects like nausea, kidney impairment, and bone mineral density loss. It may be a good option for people experiencing side effects on Truvada. However, Descovy is not approved for all populations.
- **APRETUDE** can cause temporary physical reactions such as lumps at the injection site.
- **YEZTUGO** can cause symptoms like redness, pain, or swelling at the injection sites. Small lumps that form at the injection site can last for months. In the clinical trial, less than 2% of people stopped Yeztugo because of the lumps. Some people may also experience headache or nausea.