

PrEP: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis to Reduce your Risk of Getting HIV

What is PrEP:

PrEP is a medicine taken **before** a potential exposure to prevent HIV infection. Daily PrEP is a combination of two antiretroviral medicines (combined into one pill), which ensures you are getting the right combined daily dose for each medicine to work. Injectable PrEP is one, long-acting medication given every 2 months after an initial loading dose. The medications that make up PrEP block the virus's ability to start infections.

PrEP vs PEP:

PrEP does NOT prevent HIV infection **after an exposure**. If you think you have recently been exposed to HIV and were not taking PrEP at the time, please call UHS immediately to discuss PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis). PEP is a combination of 3 antiretroviral medications taken daily for 28 days. PEP needs to be **started within 72 hours** of an exposure to be effective.

Who should take PrEP:

PrEP may be right for you if you are HIV negative and engage in an activity where there is an increased risk of HIV exposure. People who may benefit from PrEP include:

- People with HIV + partners
- People who:
 - Engage in condomless anal or vaginal sex
 - Have multiple partners, especially partners with a penis
 - Have sex with other people who are at risk for HIV
 - Engage in transactional sex (sex for money, drugs, or housing)
 - Have had a bacterial sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the past
 - Inject drugs
 - Use stimulants, such as methamphetamine during sex
 - Are considering any of the above

Medications Available:

- Truvada (F/TDF) – FDA approved pill for all people
 - Taken by mouth daily: 99% risk reduction
 - On-demand (2-1-1): 86% risk reduction, **not approved for people with vaginas**
 - With SHIP: Free at Tang
- Descovy (F/TAF) – FDA approved pill **only for people assigned male at birth**
 - Taken by mouth daily; not approved for on-demand use
 - With SHIP: \$25 for a 1-month supply or \$50 for a 3-month supply at Tang
- Apretude (cabotegravir) – FDA approved injection for all people
 - Injection into buttocks monthly for 2 months, then every 2 months thereafter
 - With SHIP: Free at Tang

How effective is PrEP:

PrEP is highly effective at preventing HIV as long as it is taken as prescribed. Oral daily PrEP with either Truvada or Descovy reduces a person's risk of getting HIV by 99%. Injectable PrEP with Apretude similarly reduces a person's risk of getting HIV by 99%. On-demand oral Truvada (or 2-1-1) PrEP is less effective than daily PrEP, even when taken as directed. On-demand (2-1-1) PrEP reduces a person's risk of getting HIV by 86%. Please see the 2-1-1 handout for more information.

How long do I have to take PrEP before it is highly effective:

It takes time for PrEP to fully protect you from HIV and builds protection in different body parts at different times.

- Oral PrEP reaches maximum protection for the following body parts at:
 - Anus/rectum for **receptive anal sex (bottoming)**: about **7 days** of daily use
 - Vagina for **receptive vaginal sex**: about **21 days** of daily use
 - Bloodstream for **injection drug use**: about **21 days** of daily use

*No data is available for **insertive anal sex (topping)** or **insertive vaginal sex**.*

We recommend condoms for the first 1-3 weeks of use depending on the types of sex that you have and thereafter for further protection against HIV, other STIs and unwanted pregnancy.

- Injectable PrEP reaches maximum protection **7 days after the first injection**.

We recommend using a back-up method for the first 7 days after your first injection. You can continue oral daily PrEP if you are taking it or use condoms with all types of sex.

Getting started on PrEP for the first time:

Your clinician will order lab tests to check for STIs including HIV, Syphilis, Gonorrhea and Chlamydia as well as Hepatitis and kidney function. Most people can get started on **daily PrEP the same day** that they do the lab tests, assuming they have not had any new exposures. Injectable PrEP is slightly different. Labs need to be drawn and one HIV test needs to come back negative **before** every injection.

What if I miss a dose of oral daily PrEP:

- Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it.

- However, if it is almost time (within 4 hours) for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. An occasional missed dose will not greatly impact overall effectiveness, but it is important to take the medicine every day.
- If you miss doses frequently (more than 2-3 per month), talk to your clinician.
- We recommend **setting an alarm** to remind you to take your PrEP every day.

What are the side effects:

Oral daily PrEP

- Most people have no side effects while taking PrEP but the main symptoms people report are upset stomach, headache, vomiting or changes in appetite.
- Most of the time these side effects go away within a month.
- Tell your clinician if these symptoms are severe or do not go away.

Injectable PrEP

- Injection site reactions like muscle soreness is the most common side effect. It usually goes away after a few hours up to a few days.

What Kind of Follow Up do I Need to Continue to Take PrEP?

When starting on PrEP for the first time, we recommend to follow up with your clinician regularly to make sure everything is going well. With oral PrEP, your clinician or nurse will follow up with you every 3 months to check in, assess for potential side effects, repeat STI testing and order your refill. With injectable PrEP, your clinician will follow up with you in 1 month for your labs and loading dose injection, and then every 2 months thereafter. We routinely check in with you to make sure that our students are safer and more empowered in their sexual relationships. Sometimes alcohol or other drugs, intimate partner violence, or financial issues get in the way of safe, consensual, and pleasurable sexual relationships. The clinicians at Tang want to make sure our patients are fully connected to UC Berkeley and local resources to help keep them safe and to fully enjoy their sexuality in whatever way they choose to express it.

Is PrEP all you need:

Even though PrEP is one important tool for protecting yourself against HIV, no method is 100% effective. While taking your PrEP medicine, you can further reduce your chance of getting HIV by using condoms during sex, cleaning injection equipment if you inject drugs, and communicating with partners about sexual safety. Although PrEP greatly reduces your risk of contracting HIV, it won't protect you from other sexually transmitted infections. Your clinician may recommend DoxyPEP to reduce your risk of bacterial sexually transmitted infections like Syphilis, Gonorrhea and Chlamydia. PrEP does not prevent pregnancy so if you are at risk for pregnancy, your clinician may recommend contraception. Your clinician will also talk with you about vaccinations you may benefit from.

Getting PrEP after graduating from UC Berkeley:

It is important to plan ahead when you are going to graduate or leave UC Berkeley to make sure you can continue to get your PrEP and other healthcare. Here are some local clinics that offer

PrEP. Please start calling for an appointment **before** you run out of your medication.

Local clinics offering oral PrEP:

- Most primary care and STI clinics offer Truvada and Descovy

Local clinics offering injectable PrEP (Apretude):

- Oakland LGBTQ Community Center Glenn Burke Wellness Clinic
 - 3207 Lakeshore Ave, Oakland CA (enter on Rand Ave)
 - 510-781-2639
- Lifelong Medical
 - Clinics throughout East Bay
 - 510-981-4100
- AHF Oakland Wellness Center
 - 238 E 18th St, Oakland CA
 - 510-251-8678
- SF City Clinic
 - 356 7th St, San Francisco, CA
 - 628-217-6692

Book an appointment with us to learn more:

Log on to eTang Portal for a primary care appointment
Call Tang: 510-642-2000

Resources:

This document was based on resources from the CDC

CDC Links: <https://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/prep/index.html>

San Francisco Aids Foundation: <https://www.sfaf.org/>

AIDS Healthcare Foundation Oakland: <https://www.aidshealth.org/>

Path To Care: <https://care.berkeley.edu/>

Healthy Sexuality Coaching: <https://uhs.berkeley.edu/healthcoaching>

Gilead Coupon Program: <https://www.gileadadvancingaccess.com/copay-coupon-card>

SF City Clinic: <https://www.sfcityclinic.org/>