

FAQ's

STOP HIV PrEP NOW



MOST FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PrEP:

1. Is it true that there is a medication that can actually prevent someone from getting HIV?

Yes. There is a tablet available for HIV prevention. It is called PreExposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). It is a combination of two drugs that are proven to be 99% effective against HIV infection if taken before the person is exposed to HIV. PrEP medication is prescribed by a healthcare provider. It is free of charge. PrEP is only for people who are not living with HIV but who are at high risk of being infected with HIV. If you want to take PrEP you must take an HIV test before starting PrEP and have an HIV test every three months to make sure you have not been infected with HIV.

2. How often do I take the PrEP medication?

You take PrEP medication as one pill, once a day, for the time that you are at high risk of being infected with HIV.

3. How often are medical appointments for PrEP?

If you want to take PrEP to prevent HIV, you can work with your healthcare provider to determine the schedule of medical appointments that best meets your needs. Here is a general description of the schedule of medical appointments for PrEP.

Initial Medical Appointment: This first appointment includes education about PrEP, a discussion about your readiness to take PrEP, a discussion about whether to continuously take PrEP or to take PrEP for specific period of time, HIV testing, and other medical tests. If you are ready to start PrEP, the medication can be started right after the initial medical appointment.

First Follow-Up Contact: Your healthcare provider will make a plan for a follow-up appointment or call at a convenient time, usually within 2-4 weeks, to review for possible side effects and to talk to you about your health and to offer you any counseling you may need. **HIV testing:** You should have an HIV test every three months to make sure you have not been infected with HIV.

Follow-Up Appointments and Prescription Refills: You can discuss how often you need follow-up appointments and when you will collect your medicine refills with your healthcare provider. You can be given PrEP for up to 3 months.

4. How many days do I have to take PrEP for it to protect me from HIV infection?

PrEP must be taken each day for 7 days to provide you with full protection in the rectum. You must take PrEP each day for 20

days to provide you with full protection if you are female and for the medication to protect the female genital tract.

5. Do I need to use a condom if I am taking PrEP?

If you take PrEP as directed by your healthcare provider, it will provide you with a high level of protection against HIV up to 99%. But PrEP does not protect against other sexually transmitted infections (e.g syphilis, gonorrhea), and it does not prevent pregnancy. Condoms provide protection against all sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and prevent pregnancy. People who are on the PrEP medication but are not using condoms may be exposed to other STIs. It is important to be aware that having an STI can increase your chance of getting HIV if exposed to the virus. Some STIs don't have symptoms or symptoms may disappear on their own for periods of time. If you are not using condoms regularly, it is important to have regular testing for STIs and to get treated as soon as possible if you have an STI. Another way to reduce the risk of HIV infection is male circumcision, and remember the ABC (abstinence, being faithful to your sexual partner, and condomize)

6. My sexual partner is living with HIV and has an undetectable viral load because he/she is on HIV treatment. Do I still need to take PrEP?

Individuals living with HIV who are taking HIV treatment consistently and have an undetectable viral load for at least 6 months cannot transmit the virus to an HIV-negative partner through sexual activity. If you are worried that your partner may not maintain viral load suppression, you may take PrEP for additional protection.

7. Does PrEP have any side effects?

Some people experience headaches, nausea, vomiting, rash and loss of appetite. People taking PrEP should discuss any side effects with their healthcare provider. In many cases, side effects are mild, short term and can be managed. PrEP can also affect your kidney function but this will be monitored by your health care provider every time you go for a refill.

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PEPFAR

U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

*Condoms provide additional protection against all STIs.

For more information on PrEP, talk to your healthcare provider or E-mail us at: hiv aids@nacop.net