



Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV

Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) is a pill for people who are HIV negative that protects you from HIV. Prophylaxis means disease prevention. In this approach, people who are uninfected take one pill once a day to reduce the risk of getting HIV. The pill includes two of the same medications used to treat HIV.

How does PrEP work to prevent HIV?

PrEP medicines limit HIV's ability to enter into and grow in the body.

- These medications are typically used to treat people living with HIV. They are very effective in keeping the virus under control by preventing it from dividing and spreading in the body.
- By stopping HIV virus from dividing and spreading, these medications also prevent new infection.
- Truvada® is the only current FDA-approved medication to be used for PrEP.

Who should use PrEP for HIV?

PrEP is recommended for people who are HIV negative but at risk for HIV. Including, but not limited to:

- Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men who have had sex without a condom or had an STD in the last six months.
- People not using condoms regularly when having sex with partners at risk for HIV.
- Anyone in an ongoing relationship with a HIV-positive sexual partner.
- People who injected drugs and shared needles in the past six months.

How well does PrEP work?

- Several studies have shown PrEP to be 92% effective in preventing HIV when used daily.
- The level of protection will decrease if doses are missed.
- PrEP is most effective when combined with other prevention efforts, including using condoms and engaging in counseling.

Does PrEP prevent other sexually transmitted diseases (STDs)?

No, PrEP does not prevent other STDs. Con-

What should an individual expect if they use PrEP

Taking PrEP for HIV requires a commitment to:

- Intake interview and counseling.
- Testing for HIV and STDs, hepatitis B, and kidney function before starting PrEP.
- Taking a pill every day.
- Regular medical visits every three months after starting PrEP for follow-up HIV tests and evaluation.

Are there side effects to taking PrEP?

- People living with HIV have used Truvada® and other similar medications for several years. They are generally easy and safe to take.
- Some people experience nausea, headaches, and loss of appetite. These can be treated and are not life threatening.
- Rare long-term side effects include loss of bone density and kidney problems.

Is PrEP covered by insurance?

Yes, insurance and MediCal cover PrEP, and there are services and programs for people without insurance.

Who can individuals contact to talk about using PrEP?

Talk with a navigator at the Spahr Center by calling **(415) 457-2487** for information, questions about insurance coverage, and referrals.

