

Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) Patient Information Sheet

What is PrEP?

- PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, meaning daily use of medication before and after possible HIV exposures (from sex or needle sharing) to decrease the chance of HIV infection
- PrEP is a strategy used by HIV negative people to reduce their risk of HIV infection
- PrEP will not protect you from other sexually transmitted infections

What is PrEP and how should I take it?

- PrEP usually consists of a single tablet containing 2 medications – Tenofovir DF and Emtricitabine
- There are several ways to take PrEP depending on your health and circumstances – always follow your doctor's instructions and check with them if you are unsure

I am starting PrEP, what happens now?

- About 1 month after starting PrEP, your doctor will repeat your blood tests to monitor for HIV infection and to check your kidneys.
- While you continue taking PrEP, these blood tests will be done every three months. These tests are important for ongoing renewals of PrEP
- Tests for other sexually transmitted infections are also recommended every three months, as PrEP will not protect you against other infections

If you forget to take your medication:

- Take the medication as soon as you remember, unless your next dose is due within the next 6 hours. In this case, resume at your usual time and do not double your dose.

If you are thinking about stopping PrEP:

- Speak to your healthcare provider
- PrEP may be stopped, but it is recommended to continue for at least 48 hours after last sexual exposure before stopping for men who have sex with men. Continuation for up to 4 weeks may be recommended for other individuals.
- It is important you complete follow-up HIV testing 4-6 weeks after stopping PrEP
- If you want to restart PrEP, discuss with your doctor whether it is safe to do so

What are side effects of the medications?

- Side effects are generally rare. There is a low risk of nausea, diarrhea, bloating or headaches in the first few weeks, however these side effects usually stop
- Tenofovir may cause mild thinning of the bones, which is reversed if PrEP is stopped. Currently, this is not thought to be a serious concern in healthy individuals, however it may be important if you already have bone health problems

Some rare but potentially serious side effects include:

- Allergic reaction: signs include rash, swelling, difficulty breathing
- Tenofovir can rarely lead to kidney problems. It is recommended your doctor monitors your kidney function

To reorder PrEP medication, you will need a refill prescription

1. If your doctor **faxes/-mails your refill prescription** to the PrEP program, inform St. Paul's Pharmacy to prepare the refill for pick up using one of the following methods :
 - a. **Write** the pick-up date on the refill prescription – pharmacy will ensure PrEP is ready for pick up by the specified date, OR
 - b. **Phone** the pharmacy by calling:
1-800-547-3622 (selection #5) or 604-806-8081 (direct line)
Leave a voicemail stating your **full name, date of birth or Personal Health Number, contact information and pick up date**Please allow 3 business days for pick up at St. Paul's Pharmacy or 5 business days if PrEP is mailed to your prescriber's office or designated pharmacy (outside Vancouver only)
2. If your refill prescription is **not faxed/mailed**, bring the refill prescription to St. Paul's Hospital Ambulatory Pharmacy in person (refill processing time may vary).

All refills must be picked up within 30 days of the prescription date.

St. Paul's Hospital Ambulatory Pharmacy Hours:

Mon, Thur, Fri – 7:00am to 4:30pm
Tues, Wed – 7:00am to 7:30pm
Closed Weekends and Holidays

PrEP Phone Number:

604-806-8081 or 1-800-547-3622 ext 5