



PrEP Factsheet

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is the use of anti-retroviral medication to help reduce the risk of acquiring HIV. This medication is called Truvada. Truvada is currently used in Australia to help treat HIV infection, however research shows it can also prevent individuals from getting HIV.



How does PrEP work?

Medication is taken daily in the form of a tablet. This medication is called Truvada, a combination of tenofovir and emtricitabine, which is effective in preventing HIV infection more than 90 per cent of the time (iPrEx Study). There are also generic (cheaper) versions of Truvada available.

Current research shows PrEP must be taken every day to ensure protection. It sounds obvious, but... if you don't take it, it doesn't work!



Is PrEP safe?

PrEP is considered to be safe when monitored and used correctly. As with all medications, you may experience side-effects. Common effects include headaches, nausea, tiredness and abdominal pain which should subside over time.

It's crucial to get tested for HIV before starting PrEP. If you happen to be HIV positive without knowing it, it's possible that you'll develop resistance to Truvada. This drug is insufficient to treat HIV and would limit your future treatment options.



Who should take PrEP?

PrEP is a commitment and can have side effects. It is best reserved for guys who are at high risk of getting HIV. This includes guys having condomless anal sex with multiple partners, guys sharing injecting equipment, guys in a relationship with a HIV positive person who doesn't have an undetectable viral load, and guys that use methamphetamine regularly during sex.

5
things
to
know

PrEP...

1. Needs to be taken every day
2. Is safe and effective
3. Is not currently free
4. Should be managed by a doctor
5. Does not prevent Sexually Transmissible Infections (STIs)



I want PrEP. How do I access it?

Firstly, speak with an experienced doctor or M Clinic staff. **It is best to see a doctor that has experience with HIV and HIV medications—M Clinic staff can refer you to a suitable doctor.** Truvada has been approved to be used to prevent HIV in Australia by the Australian Therapeutic Goods Association (TGA), however, The Pharmaceutical Advisory Committee (PBAC) has decided not to recommend the funding of Truvada™ for use as Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) through the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme.

Once you have a prescription, you can buy a generic form of Truvada online, imported under 'Australia's Personal Importation Scheme for Medicines'. M Clinic staff can offer you step-by-step guidance on accessing PrEP online from a reliable supplier.



I have Truvada, now what?

It's important you see your doctor every 3 months for monitoring. This is to make sure PrEP isn't causing any unwanted side-effects that might be affecting your health, and also to test you for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

It is essential that Truvada is taken every day. It's unlikely to prevent HIV when used incorrectly and should not be treated like a morning after pill. As mentioned earlier, if you don't take it, it won't work!

16

How long should I take PrEP for?

PrEP only works whilst you're actively taking it. It is recommended that PrEP be taken during a time when you are at high risk of acquiring HIV. Should your risk of getting HIV decrease due to lifestyle changes, you may stop taking PrEP.

If you find it challenging to remember to take a tablet every day, other ways of protecting yourself from HIV infection may work better for you. Feel free to discuss these alternative options with the friendly M Clinic staff.

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