



# Understanding PrEP

## PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HIV

PrEP=  
Prevention

Empower your health.  
Protect your future.

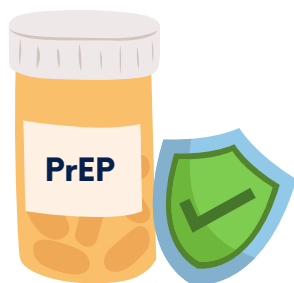
Know Your  
Options



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES  
**Public Health**

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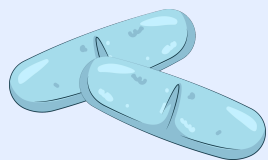
## What is PrEP?

- PrEP is a medicine that stops the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) from infecting a person's body.
- It's like a shield that protects your white blood cells from being infected.
- Highly effective when taken correctly.
- It's available as daily pills or long-lasting injections.
- It's safe, 99% effective, and recommended for people who may be exposed to HIV.

## Who Can Take PrEP?

- Anyone age 12 and older (77 lbs. or more) can ask for PrEP.
- Especially important for people who:
  1. Have a partner with HIV.
  2. Don't always use condoms.
- Had a recent Sexually Transmitted Infection (STI) (like chlamydia, gonorrhea, or syphilis).
- Share needles or injection equipment.

## Your HIV Prevention Tips



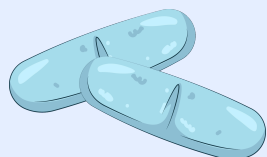
### DAILY ORAL PILLS

- Truvada - 1 pill daily
- Descovy - 1 pill daily



### INJECTIONS

- Apretude - every 2 months after initial monthly doses
- Lenacapavir - every 6 months



### ON-DEMAND PREP (2-1-1 METHOD)

- Only for men who have sex with men
- Take 2 pills before sex, then 1 pill each day until 2 days after sex





# What are the side effects of PrEP Medication



- nausea
- diarrhea
- headache
- dizziness
- depression
- insomnia

These side effects are not serious and generally go away over time.



- nausea
- diarrhea
- headache
- fatigue
- stomach pain

## Apretude: (injectable PrEP)



The site at the buttock where the medication is injected such as:

- redness
- pain
- swelling
- hardness
- numbness
- itching
- discoloration

## Lenacapavir: (injectable PrEP)



The injection site reactions:

- Headache and nausea

Reactions at the injection site:

- lump or bump
- pain
- skin hardening
- swelling
- itching
- redness
- bruising
- warmth



**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any injection site reactions or other side effects that bother you or don't go away.**



# What to expect at your first clinic visit



STI and lab testing (HIV, gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, and kidney function testing).

Learn about PrEP, how to take it, side effects, adherence, condoms, pregnancy, and safety and wellness practices.



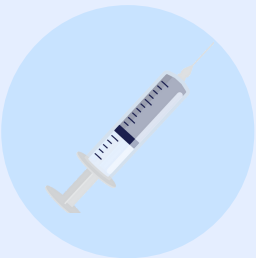
May receive a 30-day supply of pills right away while waiting for test results.



Oral PrEP: Once you are confirmed to be HIV negative, the healthcare provider will send a prescription to your preferred pharmacy.



At our Sexual Health Clinics, injectable PrEP is only available to patients with Medi-Cal or PrEP-AP. If you have private insurance, you should contact your primary care provider.



Injectable PrEP requires insurance verification and lab work before the first injection.

## Staying on PrEP



- **Regular Follow-up Visits:** Lab tests and visits every 2 - 3 months depending on the PrEP medication you are taking.



- Lab tests and refills at each visit.
- Your healthcare provider will check how often you are taking your medication, help with reminders, and tips to stay on track.

## Medication Refills

### Oral PrEP

30-day supply at start, 60 tabs once your lab test shows that you are HIV negative, then 90-day refills every 3 months after your labs have been completed. Labs must be completed *before* 90-day refills are prescribed.



**Missing appointments or labs can delay referrals!**



## **IF YOU MISS AN APPOINTMENT OR LABS**

- Call the clinic to reschedule your appointment as soon as possible. Don't wait for the clinic to call you, as there may be delays.
- Remaining on medication is your responsibility.
- You may only receive a 30-day refill until you complete labs.



**If you miss visits or labs,  
you may be disenrolled  
from the program.**





# Paying for PrEP

- Our Sexual Health Clinics collect health insurance information from all insured patients. Although we will bill your insurance, we do not charge a co-pay, and you will never receive a bill from us.
- If you are uninsured, we will attempt to enroll you in Medi-Cal or the PrEP Assistance Program (PrEP-AP).



**The Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis Assistance Program, or PrEP-AP** helps people in California get medicine that can stop HIV before it starts. It makes sure that everyone, even those without health insurance, can see a doctor and get the care they need to stay healthy. PrEP-AP is for people who may be exposed to HIV, and it helps them get the medicine and support to protect themselves.



**With PrEP, clients have access to the following services at no cost:**

- PrEP Medical Care
- PrEP Clinic Services
- PrEP Medication Visits
- PrEP Labs





# Injectable PrEP Aftercare

## APRETUDE



- Take an over-the-counter pain medication such as acetaminophen, naproxen, or arnica gel/cream within a couple of hours before or shortly after the injection.



- Continue for 1 - 2 days, as needed.
- Apply a WARM compress heating pad to the injection site as needed.



- Apply gluteal (buttock) massage after injection.
- Increase fluid intake, preferably water.

## LENACAPAVIR

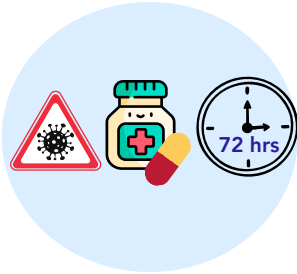


- For pain, swelling, or redness: use a COOL compress on the site area.

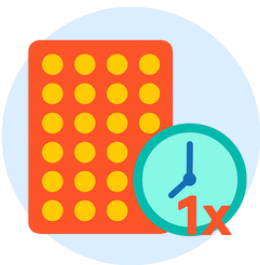


# What is PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis)?

## PEP (POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS)



Is an emergency medication taken after possible exposure to HIV. It helps your body fight off potential infection. It must be started within 72 hours of possible exposure.



Taken once daily for 28 days

## It should be used after:



Condom  
Breaking

or



Unprotected  
Sex

or



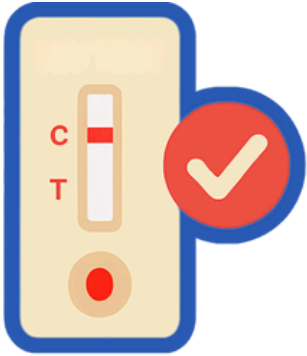
Stopping PrEP and  
exposed to HIV



**Don't wait! The sooner you start PEP, the better it works!**



## Who is eligible for PEP?



You need to be HIV negative before starting PEP. We'll do an HIV test first to make sure!

PEP is available at low to no cost at our clinics.

**Worried you might've been exposed to HIV?  
Ask about PEP — it can help protect you!**





# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. Is PrEP safe?

Yes, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is generally safe and effective when taken as prescribed.

## 2. What side effects might I experience with PrEP?

- o With oral PrEP: nausea, diarrhea, headache, dizziness, depression, and insomnia. These side effects are not serious and generally go away over time.

- o With injectable PrEP: pain at the injection site (buttock), which goes away with time.

## 3. What if I miss a dose?

Take it as soon as you remember. Never take more than 1 PrEP pill within 24 hours.

## 4. Can I stop taking PrEP?

Yes, you can — make sure to talk to your provider first to stay protected.

## 5. Can I switch between pills and injections?

Yes, this can be done, but it will depend on your insurance. Discuss with your provider and clinic staff.

## 6. What happens if I stop and restart PrEP?

- o If you stop, protection fades in about 7 days (pills) or once injection levels drop.

- o Restarting takes 7 days of daily pills (or a new injection) to be protected again.

- o You will need to take another HIV test before restarting PrEP.



# Frequently Asked Questions

## 7. Who may not be eligible for PrEP?

People with allergies to the medication, serious liver/kidney issues, weakened immune systems, and people living with HIV.

## 8. Will new medications affect PrEP?

Always tell your provider about any new medications to check for interactions.

## 9. My partner has HIV, am I at risk?

If your partner is undetectable — meaning the amount of HIV in their body is so low that tests can't find it for 6 months or more, you are not at risk of getting HIV from them. Other protections include PrEP, PEP, condoms, safer sex, and STI testing.

## 10. Will PrEP affect my ability to become pregnant?

No, PrEP does not affect a person's ability to become pregnant, have children, or their ability to breastfeed.

## 11. Are there long-term effects of PrEP on my liver?

Although rare (occurring in 5% or less of people on PrEP), Truvada and Apretude can cause mild liver injury, but this is usually reversible. Providers monitor your liver with blood tests.

## 12. Are there long-term effects on my kidneys?

Although rare, (occurring in less than 1% of people on PrEP), PrEP may reduce kidney function, but this is usually reversible and monitored with blood tests.

## 13. Are there long-term effects on bones?

PrEP might slightly lower bone strength, but it's reversible and doesn't cause bone damage or fractures.



**Key Advantage to taking PrEP:** It gives YOU control over your sexual health. PrEP works best when taken consistently and when you keep up with your check-ups!



## WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Scan the QR code and check out our PrEP educational videos and sexual health resources!



or visit our website:

<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/chs/education.htm>

