



PATIENT INFORMATION

WHAT CONSUMERS NEED TO KNOW ABOUT PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PrEP)

February, 2015

PrEP

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, is a prevention option for HIV-negative people who are at high risk of getting HIV. A medication called “Truvada” (pronounced tru va duh) has been shown to be safe and to help HIV-negative people to stay HIV-negative. If you take one pill a day, the medication in your bloodstream can often stop the HIV virus from establishing itself and spreading in your body. Missing doses reduces PrEP effectiveness. In those who took PrEP every day, effectiveness was more than 90%.

Do not stop using condoms because you are taking PrEP. If PrEP is taken daily, it offers a lot of protection against HIV infection, but not 100%. Condoms also offer a lot of protection against HIV infection when used correctly every time you have sex, but not 100%. PrEP medications don't protect from other infections you can get during sex, but condoms do. You will get the most protection from HIV and other sexual infections if you consistently use both PrEP medication and condoms during sex.

If you believe you could benefit from PrEP, talk to your health care provider. [There is a brochure to help you talk about PrEP](#). You won't get PrEP at the first visit, because important laboratory tests are vital before PrEP is started. While studies show that PrEP is safe, there have been a few cases of people who were actually HIV-positive when they started PrEP but didn't know it becoming resistant to Truvada. Therefore, HIV testing to ensure you are HIV-negative is critical before PrEP is started.

Helpful Websites

- CDC's website: [PrEP 101](#)
- San Francisco AIDS Foundation: [PrEPFacts.org](#)

[Click here to review CDC PrEP Research Summaries](#)

Paying for PrEP

Costs for PrEP may include payment for the medication as well as payment for required medical visits and laboratory tests. While most insurance companies cover PrEP prescriptions, your specific insurance plan may have deductibles, co-pays or other conditions specific to your insurance plan. As you consider PrEP, check your insurance coverage for possible out-of-pocket expenses.

If you do not have medical insurance there are insurance options. All legal California residents who earn <138% of the federal poverty level (\$16,105 for a single individual) should qualify for Medi-Cal. Medi-Cal will pay for PrEP. Legal California residents who earn >138% of the federal poverty level can purchase insurance through [Covered California](#), and may be eligible for assistance with insurance premiums. There may be only certain times during the year when you can enroll in some insurance programs. If you are uninsured, or have high co-pays or deductibles, there may be financial assistance available through the [Truvada for PrEP Medication Assistance Program](#). The assistance program may not cover all medical visits or laboratory tests.

Resources if you are considering PrEP

General information about PrEP:

- [PrEP for HIV Prevention](#)
- [PrEP for HIV Prevention \(Spanish Version\)](#)
- [View a video about PrEP by Project Inform.](#)

Information about acute HIV infection:

- [Information about Acute HIV Infection and PrEP](#)

Information about Truvada medication:

- [Truvada Medication Information Sheet](#)
- [Truvada Medication Information Sheet \(Spanish Version\)](#)