



# What Is PrEP?

**PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis)** is a medicine for people who are at risk for HIV but don't have it. PrEP can keep you from getting HIV when you have sex or inject drugs.

If you take PrEP every day, it's very effective at preventing HIV.

## Is PrEP right for me?

PrEP might be right for you if you don't have HIV — but you're at risk of getting it. For example, you may be at risk if you:

- Have sex with someone who has HIV
- Don't know if your partner has HIV
- Don't always use a condom and have more than 1 partner
- Don't always use a condom and have a partner who has sex with other people
- Were diagnosed with an STD (sexually transmitted disease) in the last 6 months
- Inject drugs and share needles or other injection equipment with other people

**Talk to your doctor about whether PrEP is right for you.**

### PrEP and pregnancy

If your partner has HIV and you're thinking about trying to get pregnant, ask your doctor about PrEP. It may help protect you and your baby from getting HIV.





## How do I take PrEP?

PrEP is a pill you take once a day. If you take PrEP correctly, it lowers your risk of getting HIV from sex by about 99 percent — which means you have basically no chance of getting HIV. And it lowers your risk of getting HIV from injecting drugs by at least 74 percent — which means your risk is very low, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Keep in mind that PrEP is not for “emergency” situations — like if you had a condom break and you don’t know if your partner has HIV. **If you think you could have come in contact with HIV in the last 3 days, talk to your doctor right away.**

Your doctor may prescribe a different medicine called PEP. PEP stands for post-exposure prophylaxis, and it’s only for these types of emergency situations.

### Do I need to use condoms if I’m taking PrEP?

It’s still a good idea to use condoms when you’re taking PrEP. That’s because condoms help protect you from HIV **and** other STDs, but PrEP **only** protects you from HIV.

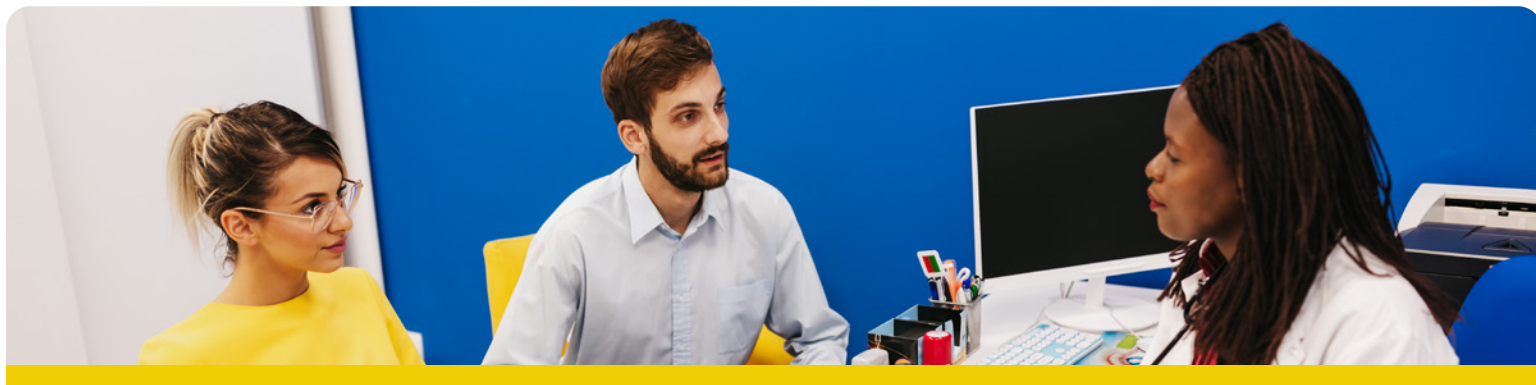


## What are the side effects of PrEP?

PrEP is safe — but some people do have side effects. These can include

- Diarrhea
- Feeling sick to your stomach
- Headache
- Feeling tired
- Stomach pain

If you have side effects from PrEP, they’ll probably go away over time. Talk to your doctor if you have side effects that bother you a lot or don’t go away.



## How do I get PrEP?

You'll need to get a prescription for PrEP from a doctor or another health care provider. There are 2 different brands of PrEP:

- **Truvada** is for everyone at risk of getting HIV through sex or sharing needles or other injection equipment
- **Descovy** is for people at risk of getting HIV through sex (except for people assigned female at birth who are at risk of getting HIV through vaginal sex)

If you don't have a doctor, try contacting community health centers near you to see if you can get a prescription there. Or go to [locator.hiv.gov](https://locator.hiv.gov) to find HIV services near you.

After you start taking PrEP, you'll need to see your doctor every 3 months.

## How do I pay for PrEP?

Most health insurance plans cover the full cost of PrEP. If you have health insurance, check with your insurance company to see what your plan covers.

If you need help paying for PrEP — including related doctor visits and lab tests:

- Go to [readyssetprep.hiv.gov](https://readyssetprep.hiv.gov) to see if you qualify for PrEP at no cost through the Ready, Set, PrEP program (sponsored by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services)
- Check out [findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov](https://findahealthcenter.hrsa.gov) to look for a health center that charges people based on what they can pay
- See if your state has a PrEP assistance program

To learn more about HIV, visit:  
[nmlm.gov/guides/HIV-AIDS-Online-Resources](https://nmlm.gov/guides/HIV-AIDS-Online-Resources)