What Is PrEP?

PrEP, a pill taken every day, is a promising new tool to prevent HIV. This is similar to the way birth control pills are taken every day to prevent pregnancy.

PrEP is highly effective at preventing HIV when used the right way. It cannot prevent STDs or pregnancy. This is why PrEP is often used along with condoms or other prevention tools.

Right now, Truvada® is the only medication approved to be used as PrEP. Truvada® is used by people who are HIV-negative as a once-daily medicine to prevent HIV. When combined with other medicines, Truvada® can be used as treatment for people who are HIV-positive.

Who Uses PrEP?

PrEP is used by HIV-negative people at high risk of getting HIV. It is an especially helpful tool for people who may be at high risk of HIV, including:

- men who have sex with other men
- transgender women who have sex with men
- people who are in an ongoing sexual relationship with someone who is HIV-positive

Is PrEP Right For Me?

PrEP is an easy and effective way to prevent HIV. Only you can decide if PrEP is a good addition to whatever you are already doing to take care of your sexual health. Consider PrEP if you:

- are having trouble taking steps to lower the chances of getting HIV when having sex
- are doing a lot to lower the chances of getting HIV, but want to do even more

How Do I Get PrEP?

The first step to getting PrEP is talking to a nurse or doctor. They will:

- talk with you about your risks and a variety of ways to prevent HIV, including taking PrEP
- tell you what to expect when taking PrEP
- order laboratory tests for HIV, STDs, and a few other things to make sure it is safe to start PrEP

If you are HIV-negative and decide to take PrEP, you will need to:

- get a prescription
- take one pill every day
- go back for tests every few months

PrEP is usually covered by health insurance. There are programs to help with the cost of the medicine and the cost of deductibles or co-pays. Go to start.truvada.com and crine.org for more information. Your PrEP Navigator can help you apply.

What Are Some Ways I Can Prevent HIV?

PrEP is one way to prevent HIV. Whether or not you take PrEP, here are a few other ways to reduce the chances of getting HIV:

- get tested regularly for HIV/STDs and talk with partners about their HIV/STD status
- if your partners are HIV-positive, have sex when they have an undetectable viral load
- have lower-risk sex (oral, mutual masturbation, etc.) instead of, or more often than, anal or vaginal sex
- limit your number of sex partners
- use condoms for anal or vaginal sex

* PrEP is short for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis.
PrEP
a daily pill to prevent HIV
FOR PATIENTS

Where Can I Get More Information?

Find a PrEP Navigator at mass.gov/dph/prep

CDC: www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/prep/


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