

## What is PrEP?

PrEP stands for *Pre*-Exposure Prophylaxis. It's a medication that HIV-negative people can take to prevent HIV before exposure. Taking PrEP before being exposed means there is enough medication in your body to stop HIV.

If taken as prescribed, PrEP reduces the risk of HIV transmission by almost **100%**.



**It can reduce the fear and anxiety that many people have about sex and helps put you in control of your HIV status.**



**PrEP protects you from HIV, but it does not prevent other Sexual Transmitted Infections (STI's), or pregnancy. Condoms can also help prevent many STIs and pregnancy.**



**To get PrEP, you first need to get a prescription from your doctor.**



## Is PrEP right for me?

PrEP is recommended for all people who could be at risk of HIV. Talk to your local doctor about your options.

## Finding a doctor

PrEP can be prescribed by any doctor (GP) in Australia. You can also ask your local Aboriginal Medical Service (AMS) or sexual health clinic about PrEP. Not all doctors know about PrEP. There are links to help find doctors that know about PrEP at the bottom of this factsheet.



## PrEP is not PEP.

PEP (*Post*-Exposure Prophylaxis) is a month-long course of medication to help prevent HIV that is taken after a possible exposure to HIV. The sooner someone starts PEP the better, but must be started within 72 hours after a possible exposure to HIV. For more information about PEP, check out the **PEP Factsheet** and **[www.getpep.info](http://www.getpep.info)**

## How do I take PrEP?

There are a couple of different ways people can take PrEP: **Daily PrEP** and **On-Demand PrEP**.






### Daily PrEP








Daily PrEP is the most common way people take PrEP. It is as simple as taking one pill every day.

This can also include taking PrEP for short periods of time, such as over a holiday.

If you are a cisgender\* (not trans) man who has sex with men, you can also start with a single dose of two PrEP pills on the first day to be highly protected and then continue with daily PrEP to stay protected.

Cisgender men who have sex with men:		
DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3
 Highly protected		

Everyone else needs to take daily PrEP for 7 days before you get full protection.

Everyone else:			
DAY 1	DAY 2	DAY 3	DAY 4
			
DAY 5	DAY 6	DAY 7	
			Full protection

It is best to take PrEP every day, and this helps you keep to a routine. But if you miss a dose, daily PrEP still provides very high levels of protection if you are having anal sex. If you take less than four pills in a week though, PrEP may not give you full protection. If you miss a dose take it as soon as you remember.



### On-Demand PrEP

On-demand (or event-based) PrEP is taking PrEP around the times you have sex. For this to work, you need to know when you are planning to have sex in advance. You need to understand the dosing schedule and it is important not to miss any doses.

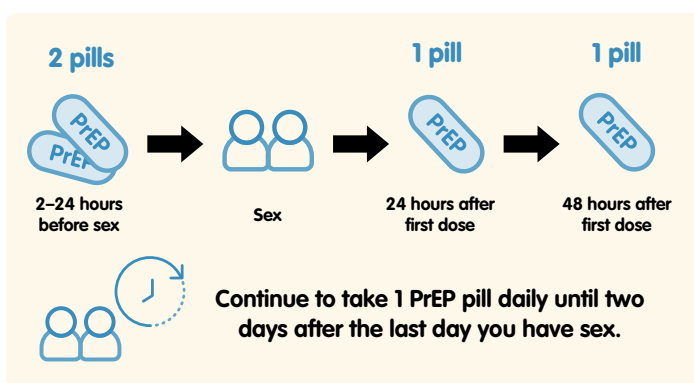
Otherwise, it may not give you full protection.

On-demand PrEP is also not suitable for everyone. It is only suitable if you are having anal sex. It is not suitable for trans women taking hormones, or for people living with Hepatitis B. If you are considering on-demand PrEP, you should talk to your doctor first to see if it is suitable for you.

To take on-demand PrEP, you need to:

- Take two pills together, between 2 and 24 hours before sex, and then
- One pill 24 hours after the first dose, and then
- One pill 24 hours after that (48 hours after the first dose).

If you have sex again during this time, you need to take one pill each day until two days after the last day you have sex.



\*Cisgender means the gender you are now is the same as what was presumed for you at birth.

## Where to get PrEP

Once you have your prescription, if you have a Medicare card, you can get your PrEP from a local chemist. You can also import PrEP for your personal use from overseas online pharmacies. You will still need a script from your doctor to be able to order it online.

If you do not have a Medicare card, you can still get PrEP by ordering it through these online pharmacies.

If you are ordering from these online pharmacies, each time you need to order, make sure you plan ahead to get your next scripts from your doctor, place your order and allow for shipping to receive your PrEP in time.

There are links to find these online pharmacies at the bottom of this factsheet.

## How much does PrEP cost?

If you have Medicare card and get PrEP from a local chemist, each script (30 pills) will cost:

	Full price	Concession Card*
Standard	\$31.60	\$7.70
Closing the Gap (CTG) scheme	\$7.70	Free

\* (such as a Health Care Card, Commonwealth Seniors Health Card, or a Pensioner Concession Card)

**Talk to your doctor if you are an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and would like to access the 'Closing the Gap' scheme.**

If you import PrEP from overseas online pharmacies, the prices vary, and you will need to check the different websites.

## Does PrEP have side effects?

**Most people don't experience any side effects at all.** A small number of people experience mild side effects when they start taking PrEP, such as headaches and upset stomachs. But these usually only last for a few days. Taking PrEP with or just after food will often help to reduce these side effects. Talk to your doctor if you are worried about any side effects and especially if they persist.



It's rare, but a very small number of people may experience changes to how their kidneys work and their bone strength if their bones are not already strong. These usually occur in people that already have existing or other medical conditions, but your doctor will check for these before you start PrEP and monitor them regularly just to be sure.

## Links to find a doctor

Doctors that are known to prescribe PrEP:

- PrEP'D For Change
- PAN (PrEPAccessNow)

A letter to give to a doctor that might not know about PrEP, so they know what to do:

- Client PrEP Letter



### Other factsheets:

- **Treatment as Prevention** Factsheet
- **HIV Testing** Factsheet
- **PEP (Post-Exposure Prophylaxis)** Factsheet



### Other resources:

- **Us Mob and HIV** Booklet
- **Us Mob and HIV** Website
- **Better to Know** Website
- **Young Deadly Free** Website
- **ATSIHIV** Website
- **Get PrEP'D** Website (for men, including trans men, who have sex with men)



### Services for information and support:

- State and Territory HIV Services and organisations for people Living with HIV.