

HIV FACTSHEET

BIOMEDICAL PREVENTION OF HIV: PrEP AND PEP

	PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PrEP)	POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PEP)
What are PrEP and PEP?	<p>PrEP involves taking a combination of medications to reduce the risk of acquiring HIV infection. It can be taken by HIV-negative individuals at high risk of infection.</p> <p>When taken as prescribed, the medication reduces the risk of acquiring sexually transmitted HIV by more than 90%.</p> <p>If an individual acquires HIV infection, PrEP must be discontinued immediately.</p>	<p>PEP is used to help prevent the acquisition of HIV infection by individuals who may have been recently exposed to HIV.</p> <p>PEP can reduce the risk of HIV infection by more than 80%, when used as prescribed.</p>
When is it taken?	<p>PrEP is taken once a day, on an ongoing basis, in advance of high risk activity.</p> <p>PrEP is less effective if the prescribed dosing schedule is not followed.</p>	<p>PEP is effective when taken within 72 hours of suspected high risk exposure to HIV.</p> <p>It involves antiretroviral medications taken once daily for four weeks (28 days).</p>
Who should be considered for PrEP and PEP?	<p>Individuals at high risk of HIV infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engages in condomless sexual activity with an HIV-positive partner who is not on treatment or whose viral load* is ≥ 200 copies/ml engages in condomless sexual activity with a partner whose HIV status is unknown engages in sexual activity that involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> no or inconsistent condom use exchange of sex for drugs or money use of illicit drugs or alcohol dependence shared drug use equipment have a diagnosis of sexually transmitted infections (STI) prison experience <p>In addition, PrEP should be considered for individuals who have taken PEP (i.e., who are at ongoing, high risk of infection).</p>	<p>PEP should be considered for individuals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> who have had a high-risk exposure to HIV in the workplace (e.g., healthcare setting) or who have had a high-risk exposure to HIV outside of the workplace (e.g., condomless sex with an HIV-positive partner who is not on treatment or whose viral load* is ≥ 200 copies/ml, sexual assault, etc.)

* A viral load of < 200 copies/ml is considered undetectable.



OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- Strict adherence to the prescribed regimen is essential for the efficacy of PrEP and PEP. Regular HIV and STI testing (i.e., at least once every 3 months) is necessary for patients taking PrEP.
- PEP complements, but doesn't replace, other HIV prevention methods such as condoms or PrEP.
- Consult with your provincial/territorial HIV programs for more information on coverage of PrEP and PEP through provincial/territorial drug formularies.

For more prevention and treatment information, consult an infectious disease specialist or physician with experience in the management of HIV.



Additional Resources

- [Government of Canada: HIV and AIDS for Health Professionals](#)
- [Health Canada's Regulatory Decision Summary](#)
- [Canadian Guideline on HIV Pre-exposure Prophylaxis and Non-occupational Post-exposure Prophylaxis](#)
- [CATIE: Post-exposure Prophylaxis \(PEP\)](#)
- [CATIE: Oral Pre-exposure Prophylaxis \(PrEP\)](#)
- [HIV HIRI Risk Index for Men Who Have Sex With Men](#)