

# HIV FACTSHEET

## BIOMEDICAL PREVENTION OF HIV: PrEP AND PEP

	PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PrEP)	POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PEP)
<b>What are PrEP and PEP?</b>	<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 <b>90%</b>.</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 <b>80%</b>, when used as prescribed.</p>
<b>When is it taken?</b>	<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 <b>within 72 hours</b> of suspected high risk exposure to HIV.</p> <p>It involves antiretroviral medications taken once daily for four weeks (28 days).</p>
<b>Who should be considered for PrEP and PEP?</b>	<p>Individuals at high risk of HIV infection:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>engages in condomless sexual activity with an HIV-positive partner who is not on treatment or whose viral load* is <math>\geq 200</math> copies/ml</li> <li>engages in condomless sexual activity with a partner whose HIV status is unknown</li> <li>engages in sexual activity that involves: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>no or inconsistent condom use</li> <li>exchange of sex for drugs or money</li> <li>use of illicit drugs or alcohol dependence</li> </ul> </li> <li>shared drug use equipment</li> <li>have a diagnosis of sexually transmitted infections (STI)</li> <li>prison experience</li> </ul> <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"> <li>who have had a high-risk exposure to HIV in the workplace (e.g., healthcare setting) or</li> <li>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 <math>\geq 200</math> copies/ml, sexual assault, etc.)</li> </ul>

\* There is effectively no risk of sexual transmission of HIV when the viral load is  $< 200$  copies/ml.



## 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](#)