

PrEP for Black Gay and Bi-sexual Men in the US

What You Need to Know

What is PrEP?

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, for HIV prevention is the use of antiretrovirals to reduce the risk of HIV in HIV-negative people. In 2012, the US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the oral pill Truvada for PrEP in adult men and women, and it is the only drug approved for HIV prevention in the US. Truvada is an antiretroviral drug that is also commonly used in combination therapy for HIV-positive people. Other drugs and non-daily regimens are being tested as well but daily Truvada is the only FDA-approved option for PrEP.

PrEP on the Web

PrEPWatch.org
Prepfacts.org
myprepexperience.blogspot.com

How does it relate to PEP?

PEP, or *post*-exposure prophylaxis, is another form of HIV prevention. It is different than daily PrEP in that it is the use of 2-3 antiretroviral medications for a 28-day period, which begins *after* a potential exposure (and within 72 hours).



PrEP for gay and bisexual men

The iPrEx study demonstrated the effectiveness of PrEP among gay men and other men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women. The multi-country trial showed that when used as directed, daily oral Truvada can reduce risk of HIV by up to 90%. The follow-on study, iPrEx OLE, published data in July 2014 and provided additional data on PrEP effectiveness. OLE analyzed levels of protection based on levels [of Truvada detectable in the blood] corresponding to more-or-less daily dosing, compared with more infrequent dosing.

Not surprisingly, more frequent dosing led to more protection. But even infrequent dosing reduced risk compared to people who weren't taking PrEP at all.

Key things to know about PrEP

- PrEP works if you take it but **adherence is essential**. Each of the trials found that people who had high levels of adherence had high levels of protection. Lower adherence was associated with low or no protection.
- There were **no serious side effects observed** in any of the PrEP trials. In some cases there were mild "start-up" side effects like occasional nausea reported in trials, but these went away over time.
- Drug resistance has been rare in the studies to date and even more rare in those individuals who were HIV-negative when starting on PrEP. It is essential to confirm negative status, and this also **reinforces the importance of regular testing** for anyone initiating or taking PrEP.
- PrEP **does not protect against other STDs**.

Accessing and paying for PrEP

Most insurance companies and Medicaid programs have been covering PrEP. Some companies and programs require prior-authorization, which is an extra set of paperwork that needs to be filled out. And the type of insurance coverage, including prescription drug benefits, will determine the cost to you as the consumer.

If you are not covered by insurance, are underinsured, or if you have trouble accessing PrEP through your Medicaid program, there is also a medication assistance program offered by Gilead Sciences, Inc, the maker of Truvada. Visit <http://bit.ly/1fbUSP8> for more information on who is eligible and how to participate in the program.

If you have trouble getting a prescription for Truvada as PrEP from your provider, or getting a PrEP prescription covered by insurance or Medicaid, send an email to the great folks at My PrEP Experience: myprepexperience@gmail.com.

For Your Provider

If your health care provider is unfamiliar with PrEP feel free to share this factsheet as a resource. You can also share the CDC PrEP guidelines available at <http://tinyurl.com/qgtnwak>, which detail how to prescribe and monitor PrEP.

To learn more about AVAC visit avac.org

To learn more about YBGLI visit ybgli.org

