

An information sheet for Pre Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)



The PrEP Basics

What is all this talk about PrEP?

PrEP is short for *Pre Exposure Prophylaxis*.

Pre exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is one form of HIV prevention used by people who don't have HIV and are at risk of acquiring HIV. When guys have penetrative sex with other guys, passing on HIV from one guy to another can happen. Given this, it is important to consider methods of protection to ensure we make our best health decisions.

Taking PrEP can be as simple as taking one oral pill a day, and it only takes about a week to provide maximum protection from HIV. Consult with your doctor though because waiting times for PrEP to become effective in preventing HIV may vary depending on your body. Current studies show that PrEP can offer you very high levels of protection from HIV, when taken as prescribed by your doctor. For many men who have sex with other men (including trans identified men), ensuring informed choices are made about their sexual health is important.



It's less awkward to

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Don't let your hot moments turn into awkward ones.

Visit comeprepd.info to find out about the new weapon in HIV prevention.



[#comeprepd](https://www.instagram.com/comeprepd)


What is Truvada®?

Truvada® is prescription medicine.

Truvada® is a combination therapy which includes two drugs; emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate. For HIV positive guys, Truvada® is used alongside other anti-HIV treatments to treat HIV-1. Truvada® alone isn't a complete treatment. Truvada® used as HIV therapy for HIV positive guys is available on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme (PBS).

Currently Truvada® is the only medication recommended to be used as PrEP.

On the 6th of May 2016, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) registered Truvada® for HIV prevention. Truvada® used as PrEP however is not on the PBS at this time. Costs are therefore not subsidised by the Australian government.

How does Truvada work?

Truvada® works by blocking an enzyme called HIV reverse transcriptase.

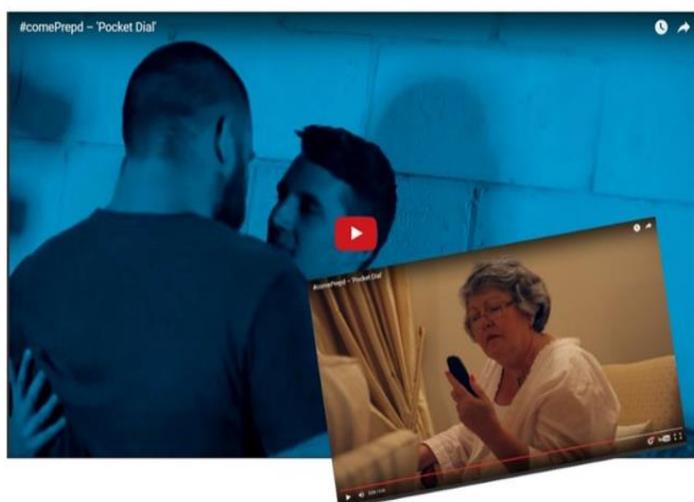
By blocking this enzyme, it prevents HIV from making more copies of itself

How many days do I need to take PrEP before achieving maximum protection?

One pill a day is recommended to achieve protection from PrEP, however you **need to wait a number of days** before maximum protection is achieved.

- For **receptive anal sex** maximum protection is achieved **after seven days** of **daily use**.
- For **insertive anal sex, vaginal sex, and injecting drug use**, maximum protection is achieved **after 21 days** of **daily use**

Ask your doctor for recommended waiting times to ensure you have achieved maximum protection before having sex.

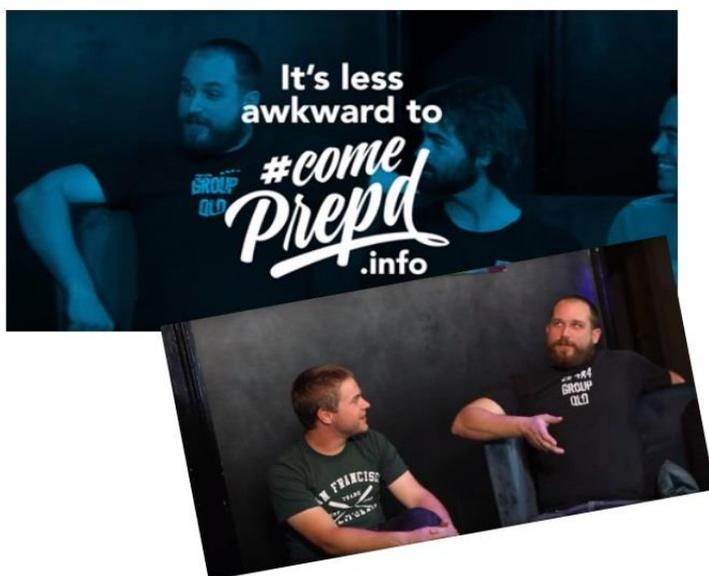


Who may benefit from PrEP?

- Couples in serodiscordant relationships (one negative partner and one positive partner) where the negative partner shares responsibility.
- Guys who find it difficult to negotiate HIV prevention with their sexual partners.
- Anyone who wants to feel confident in managing their own HIV sexual health.
- Guys who prefer to engage in condom less sex (bare backing).
- Guys who have sex while inhibited by drugs or alcohol.
- Guys who have difficulties maintaining an erection while using condoms



Common Questions



Aside from protection from HIV, will PrEP protect me from getting other sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?

No. PrEP *only* offers protection from HIV transmission.

Using condoms with PrEP will offer further protection from HIV as well as added protection from other STIs. Once commencing PrEP, your doctor will ask you to test for HIV and other STIs every three months. The relationship you develop with your doctor will mean you test more regularly for STIs, and this is great news. Detecting STIs early means treating STIs early.

He says he is on PrEP. How do I know if someone I'm having sex with is really on PrEP?

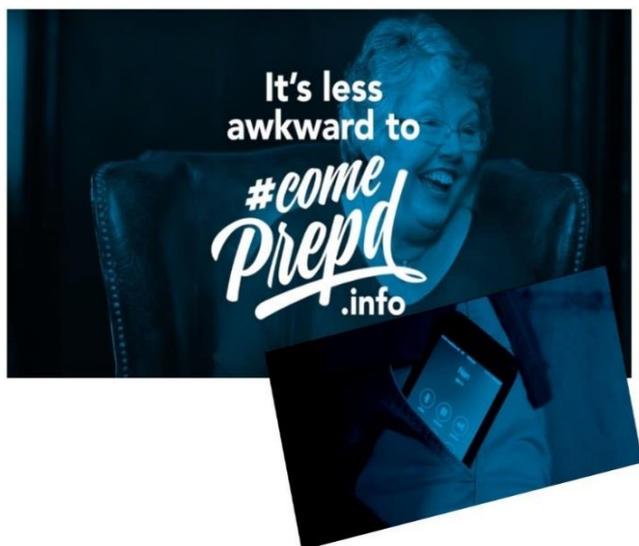
Only *you* can be sure if you are using PrEP to prevent HIV transmission. If you are not sure if your sexual partner is on PrEP or adhering to PrEP correctly, condoms and water based lube is recommended.

I'm currently using PrEP to prevent HIV. What happens if I miss a dose or two?

Taking PrEP as prescribed by your doctor directly relates to the effectiveness of PrEP in preventing HIV transmission.

Your level of protection will be reduced if you miss any doses. Make sure you discuss any changes to your routine with your doctor. Existing studies may suggest different types of adherence. Your doctor will inform you how best to adhere to PrEP.

There are free mobile phone apps available that can remind you to take medications if you find it difficult to remember to take your pills.



Do I still need to use condoms if I'm using PrEP?

This decision should be made between you and your doctor. Current research shows using PrEP alone can provide very high levels of protection from HIV.

Condoms may offer added protection from HIV transmission and also reduce the risk of acquiring other STIs such as chlamydia, syphilis, herpes type 2 and gonorrhoea.

Studies show that of guys using both PrEP & condoms, anxiety about having sex safely is significantly reduced. This can mean more enjoyable sex.

Why do I need PrEP if we can use condoms?

Condoms have been a very effective form of HIV prevention for over 30 years and continue to be, however condoms may not work for everyone.

During group sex, if the bottom is on PrEP, do the other guys involved need any HIV protection?

Yes. Only the bottom that is on PrEP (passive role) will be protected from HIV.

The bottom may have cum from a guy that is HIV positive inside him which could place further tops at risk when having penetrative sex without a condom. In this way, HIV can be transmitted from one top to another top. All group sex participants will need to be using at least one effective risk reduction strategy that works for them.

Can using PrEP benefit me if I am HIV positive?

No. PrEP is used only by guys who are HIV negative.

Medication used to treat HIV infection is not the same as using drugs to prevent HIV infection. If you are HIV positive, in order to effectively treat the virus you need to take a combination of medication that may or may not include the medication used for PrEP. Your doctor will need to prescribe medication suited to you if you are HIV positive.

If you are HIV positive and only using a PrEP regime, your body could develop a resistance to the drugs used for HIV treatment. For these reasons it is really important to ensure that you speak to your doctor about any occasions that you may have been exposed to HIV through unprotected sex prior to commencing PrEP.

Will guys on Prep stop using condoms?

Queensland data indicates an increasing trend in condomless sex over the last five years. Certainly some community members are concerned that increased uptake of PrEP by men as a viable HIV protection option will mean an increase in bare back sex. QuAC understand that bare back sex will continue to happen, and for some men PrEP offers a legitimate risk reduction strategy to reduce the likelihood of HIV transmission.

PrEP Myths

PrEP makes you more promiscuous.

In other countries like the United States, where Prep is more commonly used, there are discussions where men have identified feeling “slut shamed” by other gay men who judge their decision to use PrEP.

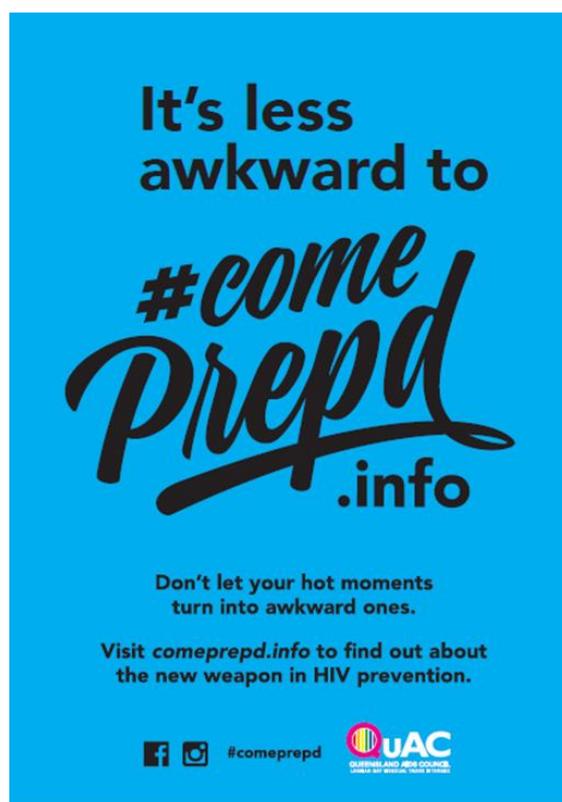
Many feelings around shame and stigma related to sex are nothing new. In the event that these feelings get you down, you can always get support either through your doctor or other support networks.

Most studies have shown no big shifts in numbers of sexual partners.

Using PrEP is not being responsible.

Using PrEP for the prevention of HIV transmission is in fact being very responsible. Studies continue to show very high levels of protection from HIV when PrEP is adhered to as prescribed by a doctor. HIV experts suggest that if used correctly, PrEP can offer up to 99% protection from HIV.

PrEP however does not protect you from other STIs. Many guys who use PrEP choose to also use condoms for added protection.



Using PrEP means increases in other STIs.

The information from overseas studies on this provides mixed information. While the San Francisco study identified that STI transmissions amongst participants were a cause for concern, and highlighted the need for screening and treatment for STIs, it was also argued that the regular follow up treatment for PrEP users may have in fact facilitated earlier diagnosis and treatment of STIs.

The relationship with your doctor whilst using PrEP will mean that you will be monitored more closely for all STIs. In most cases when STIs are diagnosed early, they can be successfully treated early.

Side Effects.

When using PrEP you may experience side effects including; headache, vomiting, diarrhoea, loss of appetite, stomach upset, gassiness.

Often guys who are using PrEP report little or no side effects from PrEP medication. If side effects do not go away or become severe please notify your doctor.

Accessing PrEP

How do I access to PrEP (generic Truvada) online?

You can import generic Truvada® from an overseas supplier under Australia's Personal Importation Scheme for Medicines (IPU). Under this scheme you can legally import generic Truvada® for personal use.

Before ordering generic Truvada® online you will require a prescription issued by an Australian GP or S100 prescriber. A growing list of prescribers is found on the ComePrEPd PrEP Prescriber directory.

The access sheets below will outline the full step by step procedure

ACCESS SHEETS FOR ONLINE IMPORTATION.

GREEN CROSS PHARMACY

(Currently the most cost effective option)

Downloadable access sheet available on
ComePrEPd.info

<http://www.purchase-prep.com/>

ALL DAY CHEMIST

Downloadable access available on
ComePrEPd.info

<http://www.alldaychemist.com/>

AIDS DRUGS ONLINE

Download access sheet available on
ComePrEPd.info

<http://www.aids-drugs-online.com/>

PrEP PURCHASE ASSISTANCE SCHEME.

If you are on a low income or have some financial hardship you may be eligible for help purchasing PrEP.

For more information see

<http://www.prepaccessnow.com.au/>



How can I register my interest in the new Queensland PrEP Demonstration Project?

On the 26th of April 2016, Hon Cameron Dick, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, announced a history making step forward for HIV Prevention at the Queensland AIDS Council. The PrEP (Pre Exposure Prophylaxis) Demonstration Project, will provide PrEP to 2000 gay men and men who have sex with men across Queensland in what is one of the most significant steps forward in HIV prevention in many years. To express your interest in the Project – please call Clinic 30 at QuAC on (07) 3017 1777

So where can we access PrEP in Australia?

The first thing you should do if you think PrEP may be right for you is to talk to a doctor who is experienced in sexual health. Only you and your doctor are best placed to decide if PrEP is suited to you.

It is still possible to obtain generic 'off label' Truvada® legally through online importation?

Yes. Many Australians are doing this online already with the support of their doctors. Generics are copies of brand named drugs which are currently available from reliable overseas suppliers.

But I thought PrEP is not approved for HIV prevention in Australia?

TGA Approval for Truvada® as PrEP in Australia was announced on the 6th May 2016. The Queensland AIDS Council (QuAC) welcomes the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA)'s decision to register Truvada® for HIV prevention as a major breakthrough for HIV prevention.

How much will PrEP cost me?

Currently accessing PrEP in Australia (i.e. not covered by the PBS) is not affordable for many guys. Many guys however are accessing their medication from overseas with a medical prescription that they have obtained from Australia. These generic drugs are more affordable. Currently the cheapest option available for online importation is via Green Cross Pharmacy – A three month supply is approximately AU\$170 (*subject to exchange rates*).

What are the TGA recommendations for importing medicines for personal use?

Importing medications into Australia may be subject to import controls. Before importing medical products by mail or courier it is important to comply with Australian recommendations for importation. As import controls may change it's important to check before you import every time.

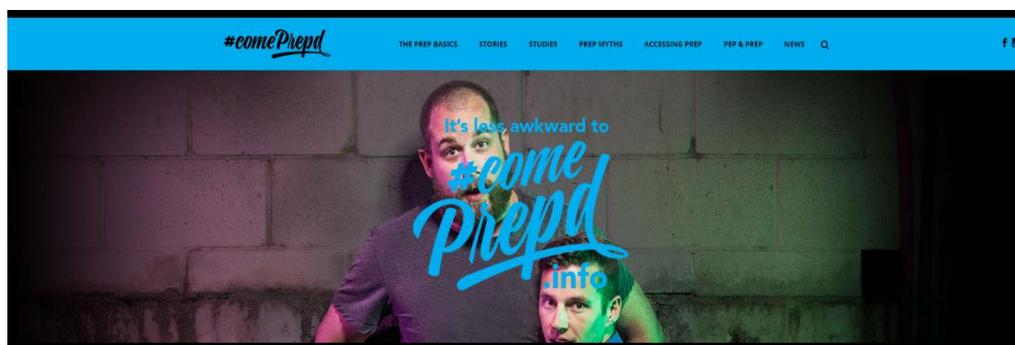
You can legally import a three month supply of PrEP (generic Truvada®) to Australia.

<http://www.tga.gov.au/importing-mail-or-courier>

Want to learn more about PrEP?

- Learn difference between PrEP & PEP
- Download the online importation access sheets
- See stories from guys who are currently using PrEP
- See the main study findings for Proud Study, Ipergay Study, San Francisco Program, IPREX Study.
- Find ASHM Guidelines + videos of 'What is PrEP'
- Find the link to the TGA for recommendations for importing medicines per personal use

Visit www.comeprepd.info





Media Release

Date: 20 September 2015

Contact: Michael Scott info@quac.org.au

3017 1777

History Making PrEP Demonstration Project Announced

Today, Mr Cameron Dick, Minister for Health and Ambulance Services, announced a history making step forward for HIV Prevention at the Queensland AIDS Council.

The PrEP (Pre Exposure Prophylaxis) Demonstration Project, will provide PrEP to 2000 gay men and men who have sex with men across Queensland in what is one of the most significant steps forward in HIV prevention in many years.

The Queensland AIDS Council will play a crucial role in the Demonstration Project to ensure that the Demonstration Project reaches the people who will benefit from PrEP.

Clinic 30, the sexual and mental health service at Queensland AIDS Council is already providing opportunities for gay men and men who have sex with men to import PrEP from overseas. To date the Clinic has written scripts for over

200 men to import generic medication, however the costs associated with importation are prohibitive for some people.

Queensland AIDS Council Executive Director Michael Scott indicated the announcement was an exciting breakthrough for all Queenslanders, and a strong step forward in HIV prevention.

“In decade’s time, people will remember that it was Minister Dick who made PrEP available across Queensland.

Through this Demonstration Project, 2000 men will be able to take control of their sexual health and prevent HIV transmission. We applaud the Minister for his foresight, and his investment in sexual health” Scott said. The PrEP Demonstration Project will be more complex than encouraging men to take a pill a day to prevent HIV. The program will involve regular testing for HIV, STIs and kidney function, and importantly it brings men who have sex with men in contact with an LGBTI friendly GP to discuss sexual health beyond HIV.

Men accessing PrEP through Clinic 30 are reporting improved mental health. “For the first time in their lives, some men are reporting feeling less anxious about having sex, particularly after times where condoms are not used. By accessing PrEP these men are taking control of not only their sexual health, but also their mental health,” said Scott.

The Queensland AIDS Council is ready, willing and able to be involved in the PrEP Demonstration Project, with staff ready to go now. Clinic 30 has made importation possible for hundreds of men, and we look forward to the challenge of expanding this to 2000.

For further information contact Michael Scott, Executive Director, Queensland AIDS Council on 0427 138 373

or msscott@quac.org.au.

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