

## PREP: THE BASICS

**Prophylaxis is an action taken to prevent disease.** HIV Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) helps prevent HIV infection for those who are HIV-negative. Taking PrEP means that you take the medication around the same time every day.

**PrEP is different from HIV Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP)**, which is medication taken within 72 hours of exposure to HIV to prevent infection.

**Studies show that PrEP is up to 99% effective when taken every single day.** PrEP is another way to reduce your risk for HIV, along with talking about status with your partners and consistently using condoms and lube.

**Currently, Truvada is the only drug approved by the FDA for use as PrEP.** Being eligible for PrEP requires that you test negative for both HIV and hepatitis B. It also requires that you check in with your medical provider every 3 months for regular HIV/STI screenings and checkups.

**This pamphlet is designed to help you decide if PrEP is right for you and to empower you to take your health into your own hands.**

**Ansin Building**  
1340 Boylston Street  
Boston MA 02215  
TEL 617.267.0900  
WEB [fenwayhealth.org](http://fenwayhealth.org)

**Fenway: South End**  
142 Berkeley Street  
Boston MA 02116  
TEL 617.247.7555  
WEB [fenwayhealth.org](http://fenwayhealth.org)

AD-22

## TEST SERVICES AT FENWAY

### Walk-in STI, HIV, and hepatitis C testing:

- 4th Generation HIV serum testing that can detect HIV infection only 2 weeks following a possible exposure.
- Hepatitis C serum testing is now automatically included with HIV serum testing.
- Please visit [yourhealthboston.org](http://yourhealthboston.org) or [Fenwayhealth.org](http://Fenwayhealth.org) for locations and schedules for testing and counseling.



**If you think you're ready for PrEP, please call Fenway Health at 617.927.6000 to make a primary care appointment.**



# PrEP

**Everything you want to know about the pill that can prevent HIV infection**

FENWAY  HEALTH

## IS PREP RIGHT FOR ME?

### If you are HIV-negative, PrEP may be right if you...

- Have one or more HIV+ sexual or injecting partners
- Use condoms sometimes, rarely, or never
- Sometimes or never use condoms with at-risk partners
- Participate in sex work

### Additionally, the following groups have special considerations:

#### For gay/bi men and trans people:

- Have had recent STI diagnoses

#### For at-risk women:

- Have a history of inconsistent/no condom use with a partner known to be at substantial risk for HIV (i.e. a man who has sex with other men or a person who injects drugs)

#### For those who inject drugs:

- Live in an area with a high prevalence of HIV
- Have one or more HIV+ injecting partners
- Share injection equipment (needles, etc.)

## WHAT TO KNOW BEFORE STARTING PREP...

- **Before you can start PrEP**, you must test negative for HIV and hepatitis B.
- **Being on PrEP doesn't just mean taking a pill.** PrEP is part of a prevention program involving taking medication every day and being screened for HIV and other STIs regularly. PrEP only protects people against HIV. It does not prevent herpes, syphilis, any other STIs, or pregnancy.
- **Truvada, the medication used as PrEP, is a prescription drug.** Your provider must prescribe it.
- **If your partner takes PrEP, you cannot share their prescription.** You must get your own prescription.
- **PrEP, like any medication, only works when it is taken correctly.** This means taking the medication every day at about the same time.
- **PrEP is usually very well tolerated.** As with any medication, there can be side effects. Your provider will discuss these with you.
- **PrEP is covered by most insurance plans**, and there are programs available to help cover the cost of the co-pay. Ask a Fenway medical provider for more information.

## IF YOU THINK PREP MAY BE RIGHT FOR YOU...

### Here are a few tips for talking with your provider:

- **Be clear.** Tell your provider that you're interested in PrEP. Bring this pamphlet with you to your appointment as a way to start the conversation.
- **Ask questions!** It's your health, and you have the right to take charge of your health decisions.
- **Don't be shy.** Give your medical provider all the details about your life that could be important to your health, especially your sexual health.

**More resources: Visit [TalkPrEP.org](http://TalkPrEP.org)**, where you will find more information as well as a map of PrEP access sites throughout Massachusetts.

