

PrEP AND YOUNG PEOPLE

PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis. It is an HIV prevention method in which young people that are not living with HIV take medicine on a daily basis to reduce their potential exposure to HIV. When taken as prescribed, PrEP fights off HIV from replicating itself and spreading throughout the body. **Studies** illustrate that when taken consistently, PrEP has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV infection by up to 92%.

In May 2018, the FDA **approved** PrEP for young people weighing at least 77 pounds. There are two **FDA-approved** medications for PrEP, the first is emtricitabine and tenofovir disoproxil fumarate, sold under the brand name Truvada®. Most recently, emtricitabine and tenofovir alafenamide, sold under the brand name Descovy® was approved in October 2019.

The **CDC** notes that, “Truvada® is approved for PrEP for all adults and adolescents at risk of HIV. Descovy® is **approved** for PrEP for some adults and adolescents; but it is not approved for those who are at risk of getting HIV through receptive vaginal sex because effectiveness in this population has not been evaluated.”

Although **stigma** around PrEP exists, it is effective. For instance, the drug Truvada® has been used to treat people living with HIV since **2004**. **Clinical guidelines** illustrate that there are no severe or life-threatening side effects, although there is no long-term data on safety. Minor **side effects** include headaches, weight loss, and upset stomach. These side effects are seen most often when an individual first begins taking PrEP.

PrEP **is an HIV prevention method**. PrEP does not prevent infection from other STIs like herpes, syphilis, and gonorrhea, nor does it prevent pregnancy. Consulting a knowledgeable and youth-friendly healthcare provider may support you in accessing and affording PrEP. For instance, if you are uninsured, your healthcare provider may suggest pharmaceutical patient assistance programs to balance out fees.

Advocates for Youth believes that:

- **Providers** should be aware of PrEP and ensure that **PrEP-eligible individuals, especially young people have access to the pill**.
- PrEP should be widely available in college and university health services, which is in alignment with the American College Health Association.
- Young people **ages** 13-24 should have access to PrEP, which is in alignment with the National HIV/AIDS Strategy that calls for the expansion of PrEP services that target groups most affected by HIV
- HIV cannot be transmitted by air or water, saliva, sweat, tears, closed-mouth kissing, insects or pets, sharing toilets, food, drinks, or hugging.

PrEP Resources:

- advocatesforyouth.org/issue/hiv/
- advocatesforyouth.org/nyhaad
- advocatesforyouth.org/mentorship
- www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/prep/index.html
- www.whatworksinyouthhiv.org/strategies/prep-hiv-prevention
- www.acha.org/documents/resources/guidelines/ACHA_HIV_PrEP_Guidelines_Jan2019.pdf

PrEP AND YOUNG PEOPLE

THINGS TO KNOW:

- PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis. It is an HIV prevention method in which people that are not living with HIV take medicine on a daily basis to reduce their potential exposure to HIV.
- **Studies** illustrate that when taken consistently, PrEP has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV infection by up to 92%.
- In May 2018 the FDA **approved** PrEP for young people weighing at least 77 pounds.
- There are two **FDA-approved** medications for PrEP, Truvada® and Descovy®.
- PrEP exists is safe and effective. Minor **side effects** include headaches, weight loss, and upset stomach may occur when an individual first begins taking PrEP.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

- PrEP does not prevent infection from other STIs like herpes, syphilis, and gonorrhea, nor does it prevent pregnancy.
- HIV is spread only in certain body fluids from a person living with HIV. These fluids include blood, semen, pre-seminal fluids, rectal fluids, vaginal fluids, and breast milk.
- Consulting a knowledgeable and youth-friendly healthcare provider may support you in accessing and affording PrEP.
- If you are uninsured, your healthcare provider may suggest **pharmaceutical patient assistance programs** to balance out fees.