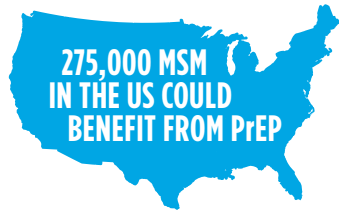




# PrEP FOR MSM

**Preventing HIV in men who have sex with men (MSM) with pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP)**

## WHAT IS PREP?



anti-HIV medications on a regular basis to protect themselves from becoming infected with HIV. This strategy of taking a

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, helps prevent HIV infection through the use of medications traditionally used to treat HIV. With PrEP, individuals who are not infected with HIV take

medication to protect yourself from becoming infected with a disease is not new and with new HIV infections on the rise in many parts of the country, it is a welcome addition to existing prevention methods.

It is important to note that PrEP is meant for patients who are at consistent and ongoing risk of HIV acquisition and is to be used in conjunction with traditional HIV prevention methods, not on its own.



**PrEP** involves giving medications typically used to treat HIV to HIV-uninfected individuals to prevent HIV transmission through unprotected sex or needle sharing.

## WHAT IS TRUVADA?

Truvada is an anti-HIV medication that has played a key role in the treatment of HIV for nearly a decade, and it is currently the only medication FDA approved for use as PrEP. A once-daily tablet, Truvada is a combination of two drugs and is used to block the action of a protein that HIV

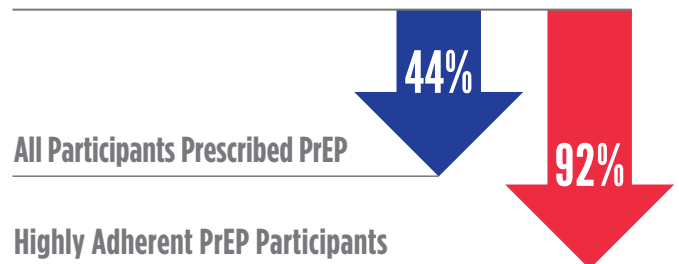
needs to multiply in a person's body. Because it is FDA approved for use as PrEP, healthcare providers in the United States can prescribe PrEP to their patients.

## EFFICACY

In November 2010, the multinational iPrEx study showed that a once-daily Truvada was safe and provided some protection against HIV infection among men who have sex with men (MSM) who were also provided with traditional HIV prevention services. The protection varied widely depending on how consistently participants used PrEP, with significantly greater levels of protection among those who adhered well to the daily dosing regimen. While no prevention method is 100% protective, among MSM with detectable levels of the medication in their blood, the risk of HIV acquisition was reduced by more than 90 percent.

## THE iPrEx STUDY

### Protection Varied with Adherence

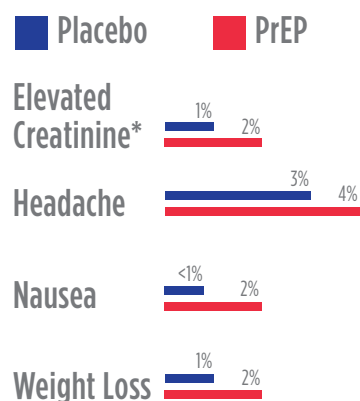


Study participants were given a placebo or a combination of oral anti-retrovirals known by the brand name Truvada.

# SIDE EFFECTS AND SAFETY

The most common side effects associated with PrEP are nausea, upset stomach, diarrhea. These are most likely to occur over the first few days or weeks of taking Truvada and for many patients who experience them they subside after the first 3-4 weeks is over. Additionally, reduced appetite has been observed over the first few weeks of taking Truvada. While taking PrEP, you should meet with your doctor at least every 3 months to confirm HIV negative status and at some of these visits to assess for healthy kidney function. Testing for kidney function is important to detect if any rare but possible kidney issues have arisen during PrEP use. As PrEP only helps prevent HIV, regular screening for other sexually transmitted infections is necessary.

## SIDE EFFECTS



\*evidence of kidney dysfunction, usually reversible

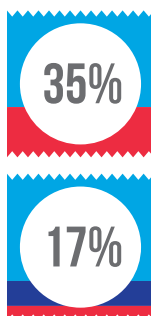
# STARTING & MAINTAINING A PREP REGIMEN

Before your healthcare provider prescribes PrEP to you, they will test you for HIV and viral Hepatitis, and they will assess for healthy kidney function. Different insurance companies may require copayments or preauthorization before they will cover the cost associated with PrEP. Before initiating a PrEP regimen you should contact your insurance company

for more details about your coverage. Once you begin your once daily PrEP regimen, it takes up to one week for protection to be established through drug level accumulation. Therefore during this time, you should not rely on PrEP to offer protection against becoming infected with HIV.

## ATTITUDES ABOUT PrEP

■ Pre-iPrEx ■ Post-iPrEx



High-risk MSM in New York who, when surveyed, reported that if they used PrEP, they would likely decrease their personal condom use.

Drop in unprotected sex reported by participants in the Partners PrEP study after 30 months enrolled in the study, from 27% to 10%.

# NEXT STEPS

PrEP offers a new tool to help combat the HIV epidemic among the hardest-hit populations in the United States and around the world, but its overall impact on the epidemic will depend on many things that at this point remain unknown, including access and acceptability among the populations at highest risk. Impact will also depend upon whether

programs implemented in community settings can achieve the key requirements for success, including ensuring regular HIV testing, maintaining high levels of medication adherence, and preventing increases in risk behavior.