

# PrEP vs. PEP

PrEP and PEP are methods for preventing HIV that involve taking HIV medicines. When you take steps to protect yourself against a disease, like HIV, it's called prophylaxis.

PrEP and PEP are for people who don't have HIV, but are at risk of getting it.

**PrEP** stands for pre-exposure prophylaxis.

## What's it called?

**PEP** stands for post-exposure prophylaxis.

### Before HIV exposure.

PrEP is taken every day, before possible exposure.

## When is it taken?

### After HIV exposure.

In emergency situations, PEP is taken within 72 hours (3 days) after possible exposure.

**PrEP** is for people who don't have HIV and:

- are at risk of getting HIV from sex
- are at risk of getting HIV from injection drug use

## Who's it for?

**PEP** is for people who don't have HIV but may have been exposed:

- during sex
- by sharing injection drug equipment
- during a sexual assault
- at work through a needlestick or other injury

Consistent use of **PrEP** can reduce the risk of getting HIV from sex by about 99% and from injection drug use by at least 74%.

## How effective is it?

**PEP** can prevent HIV when taken correctly, but it is not always effective.

Start PEP as soon as possible to give it the best chance of working.

Ask your health care provider about a prescription for **PrEP**, or use [PrEPLocator.org](http://PrEPLocator.org) to find a health care provider in your area who can prescribe PrEP.

## How do you get it?

Within 72 hours of a potential exposure to HIV, talk to your health care provider or an emergency room doctor about a prescription for **PEP**.