

HIV PREVENTATIVES

The best way to stop the spread of HIV is to prevent exposure. This can be done by having sex and using drugs responsibly. There are also options for preventing HIV infection after exposure.

Preventing exposure to HIV

- Practicing abstinence
- Using condoms during sex
- Never sharing needles
- Communicate with potential sexual partners

Using PrEP to avoid infection before exposure

If you are HIV negative and believe that you are at high risk of exposure, a prescription for PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) may be appropriate in order to prevent HIV infection. PrEP works to help the body produce antigens, and to prevent replication of the virus. If taken by someone who is HIV positive, PrEP may increase the chances of developing drug resistance, which can negatively affect treatment.

- PrEP can be taken in the form of pills or shots
- Taking PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV from sex by ~99%
- Taking PrEP reduces the risk of getting HIV from injecting drugs by at least 74%

Using PEP to avoid infection after exposure

If you believe you have been exposed to HIV and are not on PrEP, PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) may be an appropriate treatment.

- PEP must be started at most 72 hours from time of exposure
- PEP should only be used in emergency situations