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## What is “Pre Exposure Prophylaxis”?

Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, is a medication taken to prevent HIV infection in people who do not have HIV but who are at substantial risk of getting it.

## What is PrEP?

The pill (brand name Descovy or Truvada) contains two medicines (tenofovir and emtricitabine) which are used in combination with other medicines to treat HIV. When someone is exposed to HIV through sex or injection drug use, these medicines work to prevent HIV infection.

The injectable (brand name Apretude) is the only shot, “injectable” approved for the use of PrEP.



“Using condoms and taking PrEP are like a marriage, you should never consider one without the other.”

## Who should consider it?

The new federal guidelines for health care providers recommend that PrEP be considered for people who are HIV-negative and at substantial risk for HIV infection.

- » Anyone who is in an ongoing relationship with an HIV-positive partner or someone who has partners of unknown HIV status. PrEP is also recommended for HIV negative persons whose partner is HIV positive and want to conceive.
- » A heterosexual man or woman who does not regularly use condoms during sex with partners of unknown HIV status who are at substantial risk of HIV infection (e.g., people who inject drugs or have bisexual male partners).
- » People who inject drugs and share needles with people of unknown HIV status.

## What’s Involved in taking PrEP?

PrEP is a very effective HIV prevention tool, and combined with condoms, and other prevention methods can provide even greater protection than when used alone. People who use PrEP must commit to taking PrEP as prescribed and seeing their health care provider every 2-3 months for HIV/ STD testing and other follow-up testing.

## How Effective is PrEP?

When taken daily, PrEP has been shown to reduce the risk of HIV infection in people who are at high risk by more than 90%. PrEP is much less effective if it is not taken consistently. PrEP is also 70% effective for those who inject drugs.

## How Do I pay for PrEP?

PrEP is covered by most insurance companies and Medicaid. If you are uninsured, there are co-pay and patient assistance program available. For more information on payment options and a list of providers near you, visit our website at [scdhec.gov/PrEP](https://www.scdhec.gov/PrEP)

