

# LET'S TALK PrEP

## INFO FOR GPs & PRACTICE STAFF



### What is PrEP? Is it new?

**Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP)** is a drug taken by HIV-negative people before and after sex that prevents HIV transmission.

PrEP is not new. The concept of PrEP has been present since the 1980s and has been made freely available on the National Health Service (NHS) since April 2020.

### When should I talk about PrEP?

You should discuss PrEP when you provide health interventions with anyone who may be at risk of acquiring HIV. Some groups have a higher risk, such as gay, bisexual, men who have sex with men (GBMSM), sex workers, intravenous drug users and Black African communities.

### Who should take it?

You may see patients who would benefit from PrEP during routine health care, vaccination or contraceptive clinics. Uptake of PrEP is not equal, with not all communities equally benefiting. This includes women, heterosexual men and people in Black African communities. PrEP can be used by people of all genders and sexualities.

## If somebody is on PrEP, does this mean they have HIV?

No. PrEP is for people **without** HIV who may be exposed to HIV through sex or injection drug use.



However, please don't make assumptions about the lifestyles of those using PrEP. Some people use PrEP because they have partners who are living with HIV, some may use PrEP because they are choosing to have sex without condoms, or they are concerned their partner is having unsafe sex elsewhere.



PrEP may also be an option to help protect pregnant people and their babies from getting HIV while trying to get pregnant, during pregnancy, or while breastfeeding.

## What's the difference between PrEP & PEP for HIV prevention?

PrEP stands for pre-exposure prophylaxis and is taken before being exposed to HIV. PrEP is used in a planned way on an ongoing basis.

PEP stands for post-exposure prophylaxis and is taken after a single event after exposure to HIV. PEP is used in emergency situations.

## What is U=U?



**Undetectable = Untransmittable**

This relates to the fact that people living with HIV who are on treatment, and have a fully suppressed viral load, have a zero risk of transmitting the HIV virus to their sexual partners.

An individual living with HIV is defined as achieving U=U when they have been on treatment for 6 months and have achieved an undetectable viral load.

## We can't offer PrEP, so why discuss it?

Encouraging PrEP use supports the commitment to end HIV transmissions. However, we know that young people, those from ethnic minority communities, heterosexual men and women, trans and non-binary people and people who inject drugs often have lower knowledge of, access to, and uptake of PrEP.

Using the information above may help you identify somebody who is at risk of acquiring HIV, but hasn't considered using PrEP, either because they don't know about it, or thought it wasn't for them.



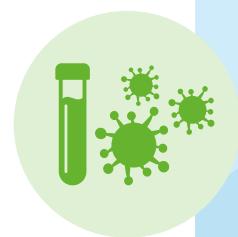
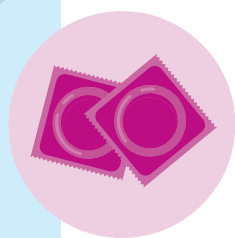
## What else can you do as a healthcare professional?

You can empower individuals to make informed decisions about their sexual health and maintaining their overall wellbeing, including PrEP.

Remind those you identify that PrEP is one method of supporting HIV prevention.

**Condoms** – Condoms are one of the most effective ways to protect from HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

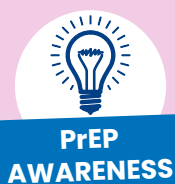
**Regular Testing** – It is recommended that everyone who is sexually active gets tested for HIV and other STIs at least once a year, and always after unprotected sex with a new partner.



## How can people get PrEP?

PrEP is available from sexual health clinics, free of charge. Patients attending a sexual health clinic will be seen by a specialist clinician, who will undertake a HIV test, to ensure the patient is HIV negative. There will also be tests for STIs, Hepatitis B and C, and kidney function.

### STEPS TO PrEP



PrEP  
AWARENESS



CLINIC/ONLINE  
ASSESSMENT



TESTING &  
RESULTS



PrEP  
PRESCRIBED



ONGOING  
SUPPORT



All sexual health records, testing and results are confidential.



People living in Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin can call our team to discuss PrEP.

A full list of all our clinics can be found on our website (although some smaller clinics may not offer PrEP services).

[www.openclinic.org.uk](http://www.openclinic.org.uk)

**Cobridge Clinic**

Cobridge Community Health Centre  
Church Terrace, Cobridge,  
Stoke-on-Trent, ST6 2JN

Tel: 0808 178 0955

**Shrewsbury Clinic**

Severn Fields Health Village  
Main Street, Branston,  
Burton-on-Trent, DE14 3EY

Tel: 0300 404 2996

**Branston Clinic (Burton)**

Main Street, Branston,  
Burton-on-Trent, DE14 3EY

Tel: 0808 178 0955

**Telford Clinic**

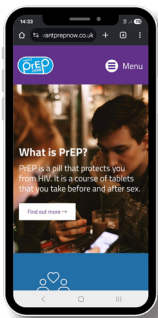
Bishton Court, Ironmasters Way,  
Telford, TF3 4JE

Tel: 0808 178 0955

**Stafford Clinic**

Civic Centre, Riverside,  
Stafford, ST16 3AQ

Tel: 0808 178 0955

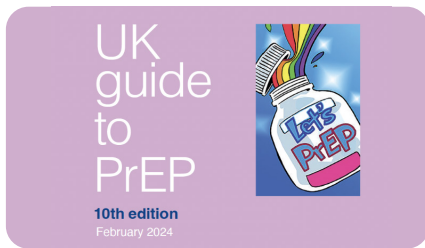


For those with a preference to purchase privately PrEP can be purchased via online pharmacies. PrEP users and advocates have set up links on the following websites to online pharmacies selling PrEP drugs:

[www.iwantprepnnow.co.uk](http://www.iwantprepnnow.co.uk)

[www.prep.global](http://www.prep.global)

## Further Links & Resources



The 10th edition of the 'UK Guide to PrEP Use' includes updates that make PrEP easier to access and take, including new PrEP options such as quick-start PrEP, event-driven PrEP, and more. It also has FAQs and information on where to access PrEP in the UK area.

[www.prepwatch.org/resources/uk-guide-to-prep-2024/](http://www.prepwatch.org/resources/uk-guide-to-prep-2024/)



Get answers to 59 of the most common questions which frontline workers, including health advisers, outreach workers, and community advocates, are asked about HIV PrEP.

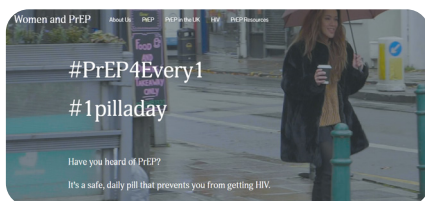
[www.prepster.info/prepfaq](http://www.prepster.info/prepfaq)



Talking to health professionals about PrEP.

This pocket guide was created by PrEP users in collaboration with health professionals to help staff be more knowledgeable.

[www.queerhealth.info/lbgt/prep](http://www.queerhealth.info/lbgt/prep)



A site aimed at women featuring useful information on PrEP, including community-led and community co-designed awareness videos.

[www.womenandprep.org.uk](http://www.womenandprep.org.uk)



A Frequently Asked Questions guide on U=U by the Terrence Higgins Trust, a charity dedicated to fighting HIV and improving the nation's sexual health.

[Get the FAQs.](#)



HIV testing, PrEP, new HIV diagnoses and care outcomes for people accessing HIV services: 2024 report. The annual official statistics data release covering data to end of December 2023.

[Get the report.](#)



11\_07 HIV Pre-exposure Prophylaxis eLearning: This session will provide an understanding around the role and use of pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV.

[Access the course.](#)