

# Information on treatment for PEP following sexual exposure to HIV

## Information for patients, relatives and carers

### Introduction

You should read this information alongside the leaflet on PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis) from HIVPA (HIV pharmacy association), which is provided with your pack of medicines.

Safer sex is vital in protecting you from HIV infection. If you have been sexually exposed to HIV, taking treatment for PEP is likely to significantly reduce the risk of infection but cannot eliminate it.

The risk of being infected of HIV depends on:

- the type of sex you have had
- the likelihood that your partner is HIV-positive, and
- if your partner is HIV positive, whether they are on HIV treatment or not

Risk of sex with no condom	HIV positive (not undetectable on treatment)
<b>Man has receptive (passive) anal sex with another man</b>	<b>1 in 90</b>
<b>Man has insertive (active) anal sex with another man</b>	<b>1 in 666</b>
<b>Woman has receptive vaginal sex</b>	<b>1 in 1,000</b>
<b>Man has insertive vaginal sex</b>	<b>1 in 1,219</b>

If you have a regular partner who is HIV positive and on treatment:

- who is taking all their doses of HIV medication
- and has 'undetectable virus' in the blood

Then the risk of you becoming infected with HIV is very low and treatment for PEP is no longer recommended. If there is any doubt about this, treatment for PEP should be started while you get more information.

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## Taking treatment for PEP

Treatment for PEP should be started as soon as possible after the exposure, preferably within 24 hours but can be taken up to 72 hours after.

Medicine	Dose	Duration
Tenofovir disoproxil and emtricitabine	ONE (1) tablet ONCE a day	28 days
Raltegravir 600mg	TWO (2) tablets ONCE a day	28 days

Treatment for PEP must be continued for **28 DAYS** to be effective

- The pack you have been given contains 30 days' supply of medication, however, you must complete 28 days of medication and the remaining 2 days' supply should be returned to pharmacy for safe disposal.
- PEP medicines should be taken following the exact instructions on the label.
- It is important that you take all the doses and do not delay them. If you do not do this, your treatment may fail, putting you at risk of HIV infection that may be more difficult to treat.
- If you vomit up to 2 hours after taking your PEP, you should take it again as soon as possible

These medicines are licensed but are not licensed for treatment for PEP. However, their use is well established for the treatment of PEP and is recommended by national guidelines.

## Side effects of treatment for PEP

These can include rash, kidney and liver problems and, rarely, muscle pain or weakness. If these occur, seek medical advice (see contacts below).

## What if I am already HIV positive?

In this case taking treatment for PEP will have an effect on your HIV virus and this could affect your future treatment options. Therefore, it is important to have an HIV test before starting treatment for PEP. If your test is positive you will be offered appropriate advice and support.

## Important information about taking PEP with other medications

**Some medicines, dietary and mineral supplements can reduce the effectiveness of PEP.** If you take any prescription, 'over the counter' medication or dietary supplements you **MUST** discuss these with the doctor or pharmacist.

## Pregnancy

If you are pregnant, or think you may be pregnant, please speak to your doctor.

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## Hepatitis B infection

If you have Hepatitis B infection, there is a risk of increased liver inflammation after you complete your treatment for PEP course. You may therefore need specialist follow-up after completion of treatment for PEP.

## Reducing the risk to others

It is important to practice safer sex, particularly the use of condoms for anal or vaginal sex. You should also disclose any risks of HIV exposure before donating blood or tissues for use by others.

## Symptoms of early HIV infection

These symptoms are called 'seroconversion illness'. They are most likely in the first six weeks after exposure and include; rash, fever, swollen lymph nodes ('glands'), headache, muscle and joint aches. However, not everyone has symptoms during the early stages of HIV infection. Also, some of these symptoms are non-specific. When they occur, they may not be due to seroconversion but can be caused by the medicine(s) or a simple cold. If these symptoms occur, you should attend the Jefferiss Wing as soon as possible for assessment.

## Follow-up

- For treatment for PEP started in A&E: **On the next working day** (or no later than 5 days) after receiving treatment for PEP, you should walk into the sexual health clinic at the Jefferiss Wing at St Mary's Hospital, Praed St, London W2 1NY (closed Wednesday morning until 13.00) or call the telephone triage line on 020 3312 1225 to arrange follow-up care and testing.
- 2-4 weeks after starting treatment for PEP: get a check-up for sexual infections
- You should repeat your HIV test 6 weeks after completing PEP

**If you have symptoms:** (especially rash or flu-like illness) walk in to the Jefferiss Wing clinic or call the clinic on 020 3312 1225 (state that you are taking or have recently taken PEP) to book an appointment for review as soon as possible.

**If you have no symptoms:** You can use home testing, for example [www.shl.uk](http://www.shl.uk)  
If you can't use home testing, go to your local sexual health clinic ([www.nhs.uk/service-search](http://www.nhs.uk/service-search) and search for 'STI testing').

## Pre-exposure prevention (PrEP)

If you are often at risk of HIV exposure through sex you should consider taking PrEP. For further information book into our PrEP clinic by calling the clinic on 020 3312 1225 or book online via the link on the Jefferiss Wing website:

[www.imperial.nhs.uk/our-services/sexual-health-and-hiv](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk/our-services/sexual-health-and-hiv)

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## Contacts

- Emergency medical advice (day time): Sexual health triage line: 020 3312 1225
- Out of hours: HIV SpR or consultant on-call via switchboard: 020 3312 6666
- Outpatient pharmacy: 020 3312 6611

## How do I make a comment about my visit?

We aim to provide the best possible service and staff will be happy to answer any of the questions you may have. If you have any **suggestions** or **comments** about your visit, please either speak to a member of staff or contact the patient advice and liaison service (**PALS**) on **020 3312 7777** (10.00 – 16.00, Monday to Friday). You can also email PALS at [imperial.pals@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.pals@nhs.net) The PALS team will listen to your concerns, suggestions or queries and is often able to help solve problems on your behalf.

Alternatively, you may wish to complain by contacting our complaints department:

Complaints department, fourth floor, Salton House, St Mary's Hospital, Praed Street  
London W2 1NY

Email: [ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net](mailto:ICHC-tr.Complaints@nhs.net)

Telephone: **020 3312 1337 / 1349**

## Alternative formats

This leaflet can be provided on request in large print or easy read, as a sound recording, in Braille or in alternative languages. Please email the communications team: [imperial.communications@nhs.net](mailto:imperial.communications@nhs.net)

## Wi-fi

Wi-fi is available at our Trust. For more information visit our website: [www.imperial.nhs.uk](http://www.imperial.nhs.uk)