



PrEP

IN NOVA SCOTIA

What is it?

PrEP is a drug generally used by those who participate in condomless sexual contact with an HIV-positive partner or those who participate in condomless sexual contact with multiple partners who have an unknown sexual history. In Nova Scotia, this drug is called Truvada. Consistent and correct usage of PrEP reduces the users risk of getting HIV from sexual contact by 92-99%. PrEP is NOT an effective prevention strategy for any other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including both bacterial and viral infections. Barrier methods such as condoms are required to lower the risk of contracting other STIs.

Why should I use it?

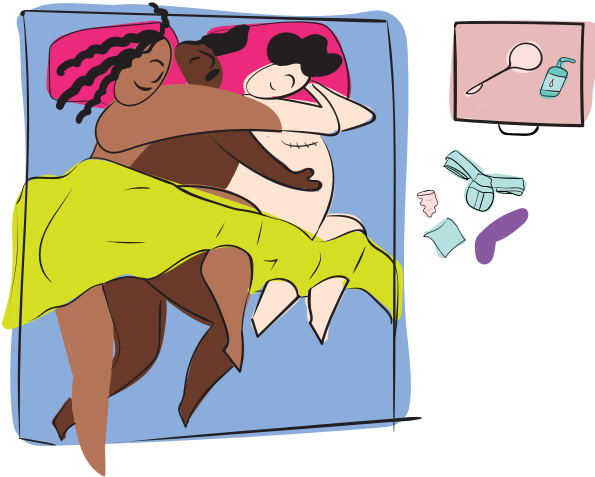
HIV stands for Human Immunodeficiency Virus. HIV is a lifelong infection, and while it is manageable with the proper medication, immunodeficiency viruses attack your immune system, which is your body's natural defence system, and with a compromised immune system your body has a harder time fighting against disease.

 **cbrc**
Community-Based Research Centre



Community-Based Research Centre (CBRC) promotes the health of gay men through research and intervention development. We are inclusive of bisexual and queer men (cis and trans) and Two Spirit people. www.cbrc.net

Sexual Health Nova Scotia (SHNS) represents the provincial network of community-based sexual health centres. We work together to champion positive sexual health throughout the lifespan for all in Nova Scotia. <https://shns.ca/>



Who is it for?

PrEP is recommended for men and transgender women who have condomless anal sex with men, those who are HIV-negative with a HIV-positive partner and participate in condomless vaginal or anal sex, and those who participate in and share intravenous drug paraphernalia (needles).

Couples who are in a closed relationship, meaning neither party participates in sexual contact with anyone other than each other, are considered at low risk for becoming HIV positive and do not need to start taking PrEP.



Where do I go?

To get tested for STIs, find out your risk level for HIV, and start the process of accessing PrEP, you can speak to your family doctor or nurse practitioner, the Halifax Sexual Health Centre, the Ally Centre of Cape Breton, and some walk-in clinics (it is best that you call ahead to your desired walk-in location to confirm that they will offer this service).

The cost of PrEP is covered by special authorization through the Nova Scotia Family Pharmacare Program. You will first need to enroll yourself in this program. Once this is done, your care provider will need to provide special authorization through the form available at <https://novascotia.ca/dhw/pharmacare/exception-status-drugs.asp>. This form will also guide your care provider in assessing your need for PrEP if they are not well informed on the drug. Otherwise, some private insurance plans will cover PrEP. These may come with their own special authorization forms that your care provider will need to fill out.

Then what?

PrEP is a daily medication. Individuals taking PrEP must have regular visits with a health care provider, once after 30 days on PrEP and then every three months, to test for HIV and STIs and monitor for side effects.

