

NEW YORK STATE PEP HOTLINE: Patient Follow-Up Guide

- Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) stops HIV exposure from becoming an HIV infection.
- PEP medication can prevent HIV if started **as soon as possible**, within 72 hours after HIV exposure.
- Take PEP as prescribed for **28 days**.

FOUR STEPS TO PEP:

1. Take PEP as prescribed, every day for 28 days

Your pharmacist will explain how to take PEP. You may have to take some pills once a day and others twice a day.

- To help you remember:
 - Take PEP before or after a daily activity, like eating breakfast or brushing your teeth.
 - Keep your pill bottles where you can see them.
 - Set daily reminders on your calendar, phone or watch.
- If you forget to take a pill, take it as soon as you remember.
 - But, do not take two doses at the same time to catch up.
 - If you keep missing doses, ask your health care provider about ways to stay on track.

2. Schedule your follow-up visit as soon as possible

- See a healthcare provider who can:
 - check that you are taking PEP correctly.
 - help if you have any problems with the medication.
 - answer any questions you have about PEP, HIV or other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).
- If you start having fevers, swollen glands or a rash - tell your provider right away. These may be signs of an early HIV infection **or** another STI.
- You will be tested three times for HIV:
 - when you start PEP
 - right after you finish PEP and
 - two months after you finish PEP

3. Manage common side effects

- PEP can cause mild side effects, including nausea, upset stomach, fatigue and headaches. These symptoms often get better or go away after the first week of taking PEP.
 - For nausea, take PEP with a snack, or before bed or try ginger candy or peppermint tea.
 - For gas or bloating, try an over-the-counter gas reliever.
 - If soft stools bother you, try a fiber supplement.
- Speak to your health care provider if side effects continue to bother you.

4. After PEP, consider PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis)

- **PEP** protects you **after** an exposure to HIV.
- **PrEP** is a better option if you may be exposed to HIV again.
- Ask your medical provider if **PrEP** may be right for you.

IMPORTANT:

KEEP A DOSE OF PEP WITH YOU AT ALL TIMES

Then, if something changes in your routine, you will still have PEP and can keep on schedule.

You can use a small pill box or even wrap the pills in tinfoil to make them easier to carry.

SCHEDULE YOUR MEDICAL VISIT

Make an appointment with a healthcare provider

You need a clinical exam, HIV test and other tests after a potential exposure.

Don't know who to call?

The PEP Hotline Navigator can assist you in finding a health care provider in your area. Call 844-737-4669.

Not sure about staying on PEP?

Talk to your health care provider or pharmacist. Do not just stop taking PEP.

Can't afford to pay for the medical visit or tests?

The PEP Hotline Navigator may be able to help you get a free or low-cost clinic appointment. Call 844-737-4669.

MORE WAYS TO PREVENT HIV

- **Use condoms as often as possible.** PEP and PrEP don't protect against other STIs or pregnancy, but condoms do.
- **Use silicone or water-based lube**, especially during anal sex.
- **Get tested regularly.** It's the only way to know if you or a partner has HIV.
- **Support partners living with HIV.** Encourage them to take their HIV medications every day.