

WHAT IS PrEP?

“PrEP” stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, with “prophylaxis” meaning “to prevent or control the spread of an infection or disease.” PrEP is a new HIV prevention method in which people who do not have HIV take a pill daily to reduce their risk of contracting HIV. The pill is called Truvada and it contains two antiviral medicines. These are the same drugs used to suppress the virus in people living with HIV.

WHO SHOULD TAKE PrEP?

The effectiveness of using HIV antiretroviral drugs as PrEP has been established by clinical trials conducted in men who have sex with men, heterosexual adults and people who inject drugs. PrEP can be considered for people who are at high risk of acquiring HIV, such as men who have sex with men who are having multiple events of condomless sex and sexual partners where one partner is HIV negative and the other is HIV positive.

HOW DOES TRUVADA WORK?

If you take Truvada and you are exposed to HIV through sex or injecting drug use, this medicine can work to prevent HIV infection by interfering with the HIV's ability to establish itself permanently in the body. Along with other prevention methods like condoms, PrEP can offer effective protection against HIV if taken every day.

Truvada (a dual combination of the antiviral drugs tenofovir and emtricitabine) has been investigated in several major clinical trials and has shown to be highly effective as HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis, provided the medication is taken as prescribed.



**PrEP CAN
CHANGE HIV IN
QUEENSLAND.**

GET THE FACTS.

IS TRUVADA LICENSED FOR USE IN AUSTRALIA?

On 6 May 2016, the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) of Australia approved the registration of Truvada for use as HIV prevention, confirming it is a safe and effective way of preventing HIV transmission. However, we all still eagerly await the Commonwealth Government to list Truvada for PrEP on the PBS to ensure the treatment is cheaper and more accessible to all Australians, outside of trials, which if approved could still take at least 6-12 months .

PrEP IS CHANGING HIV PREVENTION.

**PREVENT
TEST
TREAT**

**E.N.D.
H.I.V.**

WHAT ARE THE OPTIONS FOR OBTAINING PrEP?

If you are considering PrEP, discuss this with a doctor with experience in HIV or sexual health. HIV and sexual health clinics and general practices are listed on <http://www.endhiv.org.au/clinic-search>. This fact sheet explains your options for obtaining PrEP through the Australian health system, and how to go about obtaining generic Truvada via the internet if you and your doctor decide that this is your best access option.

On the 26 April 2016, the Queensland Minister for Health announced the government's support to expand the Queensland PrEP trial (QPrEP). QPrEPd will provide free PrEP to 2000 people at high risk of HIV. The expanded trial will take several months to get off the ground.

In the meantime if you think PrEP is right for you, there is no need to wait. **Your doctor can also prescribe Truvada "off label"**, even though it is not yet licensed in Australia. The "off label" prescription can either be filled by a pharmacist in Australia at the cost of approx \$1000 per month or a generic version of Truvada can be purchased online from a reliable overseas supplier and imported to Australia under the Australian Personal Importation Scheme for Medicines. The cost of generic Truvada is much less than the brand name and would be approximately \$50 per month.

AUSTRALIA'S PERSONAL IMPORTATION SCHEME FOR MEDICINES (IPU)

You can legally import most medicines for your personal use under Australia's personal importation scheme. This involves arranging from within Australia for a medicine to be sent to you from an overseas supplier or family/friend. The medicines are only to be used by you (or a member of your immediate family) and must not be supplied to any other person. It is important to note that such medicines may not be approved for supply in Australia by the TGA; and the TGA warns there are no guarantees about their safety or quality. Subject to satisfying various conditions you may import a 3 month supply (at the maximum dose recommended by the manufacturer) of an unapproved medicine without any prior approval required by the TGA.

Medicines ordered over the internet require an Australian-issued prescription from your doctor. To purchase or import a generic version of Truvada into Australia, you must first get a valid Australian-issued prescription to accompany the medicine being imported.

The information in this fact sheet is for general health care information purposes only, and anyone considering PrEP should talk to a doctor with HIV or sexual health experience about whether PrEP is right for them.

For people taking PrEP, regular follow up with their doctor is essential to monitor for any medication side effects or other issues, including that the medication is being taken correctly.

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BUYING MEDICINES ONLINE

The internet can offer consumers a convenient and less expensive way to access medicines. However, online purchases of medicines must be approached with caution. Medicines available on international websites are not regulated by the TGA. You need to ensure that the website is legitimate, otherwise consumers face risks, including that medicines are fake, past their use-by date or not manufactured to appropriate standards.

ORDERING GENERIC TRUVADA ONLINE

If you and your doctor decide that obtaining generic Truvada via online is an option for you, a useful website is **Prep Access Now** www.prepaccessnow.com.au. If you are on a low income or have some financial hardship you may be eligible for help purchasing PrEP via this website. Green Cross Pharmacy, via PrEP Access Now allocate free three month batches to give away under a coupon scheme arising from previous purchases and sponsorship received via their website. There will be a limited supply at any one time and you may need to still purchase your own PrEP in the future. Go to the Assistance Coupons tab on the website.

The TGA have approved this mechanism. In just a few months, over 750 people around Australia, including over 200 from Queensland have utilised the TGA Personal Importation Scheme mechanism through this website. If you need additional information to assist you and your doctor please contact your local HIV clinic or organisation.

Medical guidance from the internet should never replace consultation with your doctor and should be interpreted with caution.

WHERE CAN I FIND OUT MORE?

For more information on importing medicines for personal use see the Australian Government's Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) website: <https://www.tga.gov.au/personal-importation-scheme>

For more information on Truvada for PrEP, talk to your local HIV organisation, your doctor or sexual health clinic. In Queensland, organisations that can assist with information about PrEP, eligibility and steps to access PrEP are:

- [HIV Foundation Queensland](#)
- [Queensland Positive People](#)
- [Queensland AIDS Council](#)
- [Queensland Injectors Health Network](#)

Social Media Networks

- [PrEP'D For Change](#)
- [PrEPaccessNOW](#)
- [Come PrEPd](#)



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