

Cost

All Indian Health Service facilities should have HIV-PEP readily available. This means you should be able to get PEP at your local IHS clinic, just like you can get Tylenol, insulin, or any common vaccination.

In addition, most insurance plans and state Medicaid and Medicare programs cover the cost of PEP. This means that you can't be charged for your PEP medication.

If you don't have insurance or Medicaid or Medicare coverage, there are other programs that provide PEP for free or at a reduced cost, including assistance programs through pharmaceutical companies, like Gilead (www.GileadAssistanceAccess.com). This form allows you to apply to multiple assistance programs at once: <https://nastad.org/resources/common-patient-assistance-program-application-cpapa>.

HIV-PEP vs. PrEP

HIV-PEP is for emergencies. PrEP is an HIV prevention option for people who are at higher risk of getting HIV.

You are at higher risk of getting HIV if you:

- Have unprotected sex (e.g., if you have sex without condoms or dental dams)
- Have a sexual partner who has HIV
- Inject drugs and share injection supplies, like cookers and needles
- Have taken PEP for several emergencies
- Have been diagnosed with an STI
- Have sex while being high or drunk

If any of these apply to you, it's important to consider PrEP- a medicine taken daily to prevent getting infected with HIV.

If you are currently taking PrEP and following your provider's dose recommendations, you do not need to take HIV-PEP. One or the other not both.

What is HIV?

HIV is a viral infection that causes AIDS. If HIV is not treated, it will weaken your body's ability to protect you from illnesses. Fortunately, there are medicines that can help people with HIV live long, healthy lives.

How is HIV spread?

HIV spreads through semen (cum), pre-cum, vaginal fluids, and blood. You can get it from:

- Having sex – including vaginal, anal, and/or oral sex
- Sharing toothbrushes and razors (blood can be on them)
- Breast/chest milk
- Sharing needles and tools for piercings and tattoos

Are you at risk for HIV?

Anyone who is sexually active can get HIV through vaginal, anal, and/or oral sex. Anyone who injects themselves with needles or is exposed to other peoples' blood through piercings, tattoos, or other activities can get HIV.

Many people with HIV don't know they have the virus until they are tested. That is why it is important to get tested for HIV – even if you feel healthy and totally normal.

How can I prevent HIV?

Practicing safer sex is important – whether you have oral, anal, or vaginal sex.

HIV-PEP

HIV-PEP is a medication you can take to prevent HIV.



What is PEP?

PEP is a series of pills you take in an emergency after you've been exposed to HIV. It's very effective at lowering your chances of getting HIV.

You must start HIV-PEP within 3 days (72 hours), after you were exposed to HIV, or it won't work. The sooner you start taking PEP, the better it works — every second matters.

How HIV-PEP works

HIV-PEP is easy to take. You take it 1-2 times a day for at least 28 days. It's important to remember to take every pill as directed and not skip any doses, otherwise PEP may not work as well. It's also important to know that PEP will not protect you from other STIs or unplanned pregnancy.

HIV-PEP is for

HIV-PEP is for people who may have been exposed to HIV in the last 3 days.

HIV-PEP might be right for you if:

- You had unprotected sex (e.g., sex without condoms or dental dams)
- You were sexually assaulted
- You shared injection supplies, like cookers or needles, with someone else



HIV-PEP side effects

Side effects from HIV- PEP are likely to be mild, such as nausea, headaches, or tiredness. Talk with your nurse or doctor if you have side effects that are really bothering you.

Don't stop taking HIV-PEP until after you speak with your nurse or doctor. Stopping HIV-PEP may result in HIV infection.

Keep in mind - if HIV-PEP doesn't work, you may have symptoms of the first stage of an HIV infection, like a fever or rash. If you have these symptoms while you're on HIV-PEP, or within a month after finishing PEP, call your nurse or doctor and get tested for HIV.

HIV-PEP is for emergencies only

Remember that HIV-PEP is for emergencies only. It can't take the place of proven ways to prevent HIV - like safer sex, safer drug use, and taking PrEP, a medication taken every day that lowers your chances of getting HIV.

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