

# Injectable PrEP: A User's Guide

## PrEP To Prevent HIV



PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) is safe and effective medicine that prevents HIV. It is available as a daily pill or an injection you receive every two months.

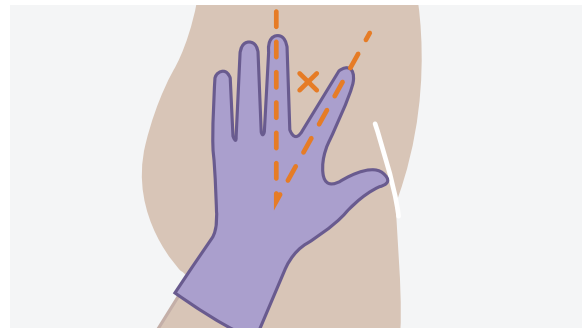
## Injectable PrEP

Getting a PrEP injection every two months is effective at stopping HIV:

- During any kind of sex or while injecting drugs
- For people of any gender or sexual orientation

Get injections as scheduled:

- Get an HIV test, other lab tests, and your first PrEP injection.
- Get a second injection one month later.
- Then, get one injection every two months.



Adapted from ViiV Healthcare's Apretude patient information insert: [bit.ly/viiv-apretude](https://bit.ly/viiv-apretude)

Each injection contains long-acting cabotegravir (Apretude), a PrEP medicine. You receive PrEP injections on the side of the thigh, just below the hip. See the illustration above.

Visit your health care provider every two months.

- Receive a PrEP injection.
- Get tested regularly for HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs).

Tell your provider if you:

- May delay your next injection for any reason
- Have any doubts about staying on PrEP
- Experience fevers, swollen glands, or a rash — these may be early signs you have HIV

Medicaid and most health insurance plans should cover PrEP without any copayments. If you have trouble paying for PrEP, talk to your provider about whether financial assistance is available for you.

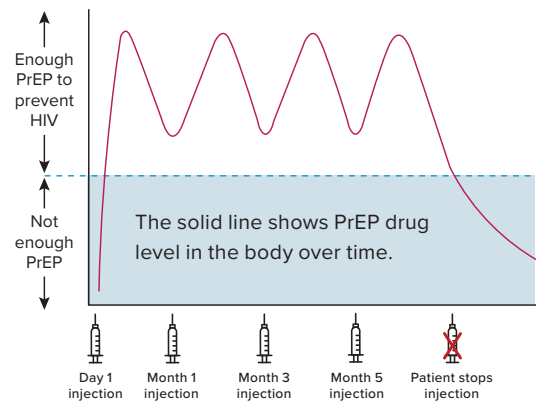
## Avoid Gaps in PrEP

Get injections as prescribed to make sure you have enough medicine in your body to stop HIV.

- If you may miss a scheduled injection by more than a week, ask your provider for a supply of PrEP pills (cabotegravir). Beginning two months after your last injection, take one pill a day until your next injection.

If you stop getting PrEP injections:

- The amount of medicine in your body will eventually fall to a level too low to prevent HIV.
- HIV can be harder to treat if you get HIV when there is a low level of PrEP in your body
- Take PrEP pills or use condoms to prevent HIV, especially in the year after you stop PrEP injections.



Adapted from BLUPrint's Checklist for Counseling Patients on Safe Discontinuation of cab-LA: [hivbluprint.org/cabla](http://hivbluprint.org/cabla)

## Address Any Side Effects

Injections may cause the following at the injection site:

- Temporary pain
- Swelling or redness

PrEP medicines may cause mild side effects, including:

- Nausea
- Upset stomach
- Fatigue
- Headaches

These side effects often get better or go away after the first few injections. Tell your provider if side effects continue to bother you.

For pain or swelling at the injection site, use a warm compress, an ice pack, or an antiinflammatory medicine (such as ibuprofen).

If you are worried about side effects from injectable cabotegravir, you can take cabotegravir pills for 30 days before starting PrEP injections.

## Take Care on PrEP

- PrEP reduces your risk of getting HIV during sex by about 99% when taken as scheduled. Using condoms provides additional protection against HIV.
- PrEP only prevents HIV. To prevent other STIs, get regular STI testing and use condoms. To prevent pregnancy, use condoms or other birth control.

**PrEP does not interfere with hormone therapy or any kind of birth control. If you become pregnant, you do not need to stop taking PrEP.**

For more information and additional user's guides, visit [nyc.gov/health/hiv](http://nyc.gov/health/hiv) or scan the QR code.

