

Preventing HIV and AIDS with PrEP

LGBTQ+ Health & Well-Being

According to the County of San Diego, more than 18,700 people in the region are living with HIV, but 1 in 10 are unaware that they carry the transmittable disease. This puts their partners at high risk of infection.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services reports that individuals within the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community often encounter specific health-related challenges and disparities. While there have been notable improvements in connecting HIV-positive individuals to medical care and a decrease in the number of new HIV diagnoses, there has been minimal or no significant changes in increasing awareness of HIV status or reducing the incidence of new HIV infections.

A daily medication available to those at high risk is quietly changing the way doctors treat HIV and AIDS, as well as how patients live with, and society thinks about HIV and AIDS. [Pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP](#), has a more than 92 percent success rate in preventing HIV among those at high risk who take it daily.

Who should consider taking PrEP?

This daily two-drug cocktail is designed for people who are at high risk of acquiring HIV. This includes:

- Individuals in an ongoing relationship with someone who has HIV
- People not in a mutually monogamous relationship with a partner who recently tested HIV-negative
- Individuals who have unprotected sex with people at high risk of HIV infection
- A man who has sex with both men and women
- A man who has unprotected anal sex or has been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted infection (STI) in the past six months



Individuals who meet these criteria should talk with their doctor about whether PrEP is an appropriate treatment. A preliminary screening includes tests for HIV, hepatitis B, STIs and kidney function.

According to the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, the primary modes of HIV transmission are through individuals who may not be aware of their HIV status, those who are aware but not undergoing treatment, or individuals receiving HIV care without achieving viral suppression. People living with HIV who adhere to their prescribed medications and achieve viral suppression can enjoy long, healthy lives while virtually eliminating the risk of transmitting HIV to their sexual partners. Additionally, individuals who do not have HIV can safeguard themselves by taking PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis) to prevent HIV acquisition.

Information about PrEP and HIV prevention is also available through:

- [PreP San Diego](http://www.prepsandiego.com) - www.prepsandiego.com
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/prep) - www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/prep

