



# PrEP – information

For those with a vagina, who have vaginal sex

[www.olafia.no](http://www.olafia.no)

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## PrEP – FOR THOSE WITH A VAGINA, WHO HAVE VAGINAL SEX

This brochure discusses PrEP for individuals with a vagina, who have vaginal sex. Persons with a vagina who only have anal or oral sex (never receptive vaginal sex) can take PrEP in a slightly different way (see alternative brochure).

### What is PrEP?

**PrEP stands for pre-exposure prophylaxis.**

**Pre:** Before

**Exposure:** in this case, we mean «high risk» sex

**Prophylaxis:** means prevention of infection - in this case, HIV.

The treatment usually consists of two active substances: tenofovir DF and emtricitabine (TDF/FTC). A variety of PrEP medications exists. This brochure discusses only TDF/FTC.

### Who should take PrEP?

PrEP is recommended to HIV negative individuals with a “higher risk” for HIV infection. The largest group of PrEP users in Norway are men and transgender persons who have condomless anal sex with men. However cis-women who have condomless sex with this group, or e.g. with someone from a country with a high prevalence of HIV, should also consider taking PrEP.

### How is PrEP used?

PrEP is taken **BEFORE** sex, and for a minimum of 7 days **AFTER** sex.

PrEP (TDF/FTC) can be taken in two different ways; **daily** or for a period around sex (**on-demand 2-7**).

#### 1) «Daily PrEP»

We recommend daily PrEP if sex is spontaneous / difficult to predict, or if you have «high risk» sex multiple times per month. You are protected 24/7. You also have excellent protection, if you occasionally forget a tablet.

#### How to take: Daily

- ♦ **START:** Take 2 tablets 2-24 hours **BEFORE** planned sex.
- ♦ **Then:** 1 tablet at the same time (+/- 2 hours) every day
- ♦ **STOP:** If you decide to stop PrEP, make sure you have taken 1 tablet/day for 7 days after the last «high risk» sex.

## 2) «PrEP on-demand /event based 2-7»

This is a good option if you have less frequent «high risk» sex (e.g. once a month) AND can take tablets at least 2 hours before sex.

It is essential you remember to take your tablets at the right time.

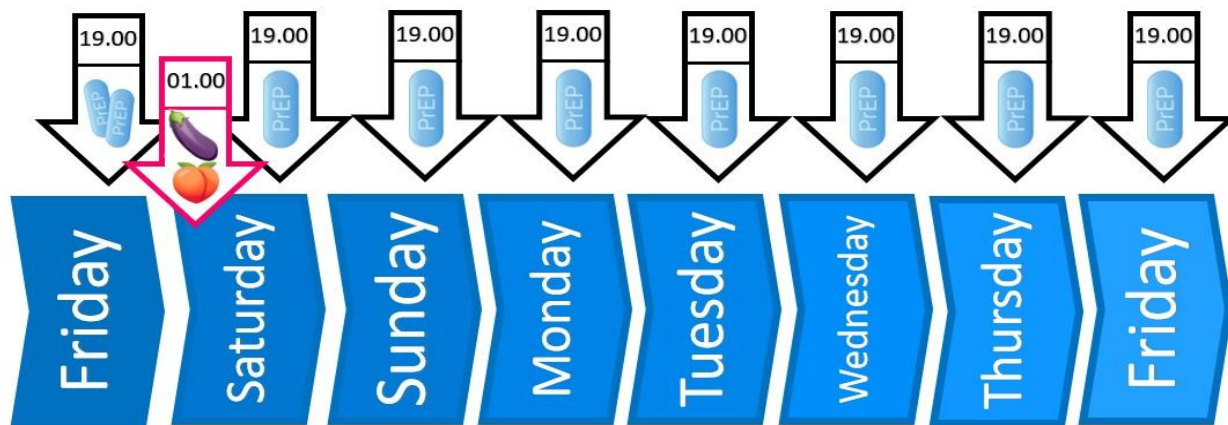
*(NB! Not suitable for people with hepatitis B)*

### How to take: «On-demand /event based PrEP 2-7»

- ◆ START: Take 2 tablets 2-24 hours BEFORE planned sex.
- ◆ Then: 1 tablet at the same time (+/- 2 hours) every day while having sex
- ◆ STOP: 1 tablet/ day for 7 days after the last «high risk» sex.

### Example 1: «On-demand PrEP 2-7» – sex once

You are planning to have sex on Friday night:



◆ START: Take two tablets on Friday, at least 2 hours before sex (e.g. KL19:00/7pm)

◆ You have sex after midnight, (e.g. KL 01:00/1am)

◆ STOP: Take one tablet daily for 7 days (Saturday → Friday), at the same time (KL19.00/7pm). You have now taken **SEVEN single doses AFTER the last sex** and should be well protected against HIV.

### Example 2: «On-demand PrEP 2-7» -sex multiple times during the weekend

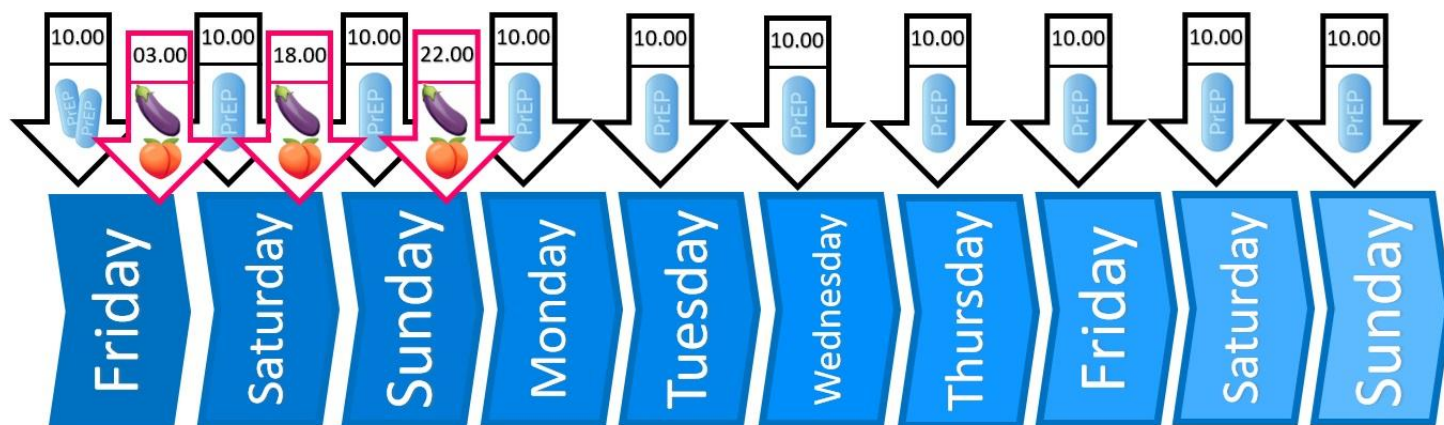
You have sex Friday night, Saturday and Sunday:

◆ START: Take two tablets on Friday at least 2 hours before sex, (e.g. KL 10:00/10am)

◆ Then: one tablet daily (Saturday, Sunday), same time (KL 10.00/10 am)

◆ STOP: 1 tablet daily for 7 days after the last sex (Monday → following Sunday), at the same time (KL 10:00/10am)

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You have now taken **SEVEN single doses AFTER the last risk of HIV infection.**

### Example 3: «On-demand PrEP 2-7» – no sex after all

- ◆ If you don't have sex at the weekend, but will probably have sex in the coming days, keep taking 1 tablet/day and continue until 7 days after sex.
- ◆ If you started PrEP, had no sex and have no plans for sex in the coming days: STOP; you do not need any more tablets.

### Example 4: «Holiday PrEP»

– PrEP while travelling, no “high-risk” sex at home.

You are going on holidays and expect to have sex during the trip

- ◆ START: Take 2 tablets a few days before travel. (By starting a few days before travel you build up a buffer of medicine in your body which make it easier with time zone differences.)
- ◆ Then: 1 tablet/day approx. the same time throughout the holiday.
- ◆ STOP: 1 tablet/ day for 7 days after you return home, (or after the last «high risk» sex).

## PrEP and side effects

The risk of getting HIV is weighed against the risk of side effects.

**Common side effects** include mild nausea, diarrhea, bloating, headache. These symptoms are most intense with the “start dose “of 2 tablets and usually disappear within a few days. Take with food.

*Suggested Tips; if start dose is a problem:*

- Divide the start dose out: 1 tablet now, followed by 2<sup>nd</sup> tablet 6 hours later. You are protected 2 hours after the second tablet.

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- Alternative start dose: 1 tablet daily. You are protected from day 7.

### **Uncommon but serious side effects:**

- ♦ Kidney injury: PrEP is metabolized by the kidneys. The risk of injury increases with age, reduced kidney function, other conditions e.g. high blood pressure and certain medication. PrEP related kidney injury is usually reversible. We monitor your kidneys (blood, urine test) when you take PrEP.
- ♦ Bone injury: PrEP is associated with reversible reduced bone density.

### **PrEP and check-ups**

All PrEP users should have regular check-up including testing for sexually transmitted infections (STIs). We also review how you take PrEP, your medical history, medications and organize a new prescription.

### **PrEP and vaccines**

**Hepatitis A:** Hepatitis A can be sexually transmitted. Vaccination is recommended if you are not immune .

**Hepatitis B:** Everyone taking PrEP should to be Hepatitis B vaccinated, if they are not already immune. Transgender individuals who have sex with men, can get this for free at Olafiaklinikken. Otherwise Hepatitis B vaccine is available through your general practitioner (fastlege), vaccine centre, or pharmacy.

**M-pox:** Vaccination is recommended if you sell sex or to men/trans who have sex with men (MSM). See «About the mpox vaccine» on fhi.no.

**HPV:** All HPV vaccines protect against cervical-, vulval-, vaginal- and anal cancer. Gardasil 9 also protects against anogenital warts .Vaccination is recommended to PrEP users depending on risk.

### **Frequently Asked Questions / FAQ**

#### **I forgot to take one or more PrEP tablets – what do I do?**

Generally speaking “Some PrEP, is better than none”. If you forget 1 or 2 tablets a week, do not stop PREP- take the tablet as soon as you remember! It is most likely you have enough active substance in your body to protect against HIV. If you frequently miss/forget doses, contact your PrEP provider for HIV testing and to discuss tips and tricks.

- ♦ If you forgot PrEP for 4 or more days and have not had sex during this time, restart with 2 tablets, then continue 1 tablet daily.

♦ If you have forgotten 3 days in a row and have had condomless sex, take 2 tablets and contact the emergency room (*legevakt*) for PEP (see below).

**Tips and tricks for remembering to take the tablets:** Choose a fixed time and try to stick to it every day. Link it to a routine activity (like brushing your teeth), or set an alarm on your phone. A dosset/ pill box can help you keep track of whether you have taken your tablets.

### I recently had condomless «high risk» sex without taking PrEP as recommended – what do I do?

**Sex within the last 72 hours:** Contact the emergency room (*legevakt*) as soon as possible, with a view to starting PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis). PEP is HIV treatment, taken for 4 weeks. Ideally, it should be started within 4 hours, and no later than 72 hours after HIV risk. If you have some PrEP tablets, take 2 tablets and contact the emergency room.

**Sex more than 72 hours ago:** Do not start PrEP. It is really important we rule out HIV, before you start PrEP again. Unfortunately, it is too late to take PEP. Contact us as soon as possible, for an appointment. In the meantime; do not have sex. Alternatively make sure to use a condom throughout sex.

### What can happen if I am “bad” at taking PrEP?

**Drug resistance:** It is important to take PrEP correctly. If you get HIV while taking PrEP, there is a risk of developing resistance to the medicine. This means your HIV treatment may be more complicated. In addition, other PrEP users will not be protected against “your HIV infection”. Resistance to the active substances in PrEP is unusual in Norway, but there are reported cases of infection with resistant HIV in PrEP users worldwide.

### Can PrEP be taken with other medicine?

**Interactions:** PrEP can interact with lots of medications, including non prescription, over the counter, anti-inflammatories/ painkillers and even natural substances or supplements Common examples include *Ibux/ Difene/ Voltaren/ Creatine*. Most prescribed hormones/ hormonal contraceptives are ok. Interactions must always be checked when starting a medication or supplement.



### Can I switch between daily and on-demand PrEP?

Yes. If your HIV risk changes, you should change the way you take PrEP. Sometimes it may be sensible to use daily PrEP. Other times, when there is little or no sex, it might make sense to take PrEP “as needed” or “on demand”. We will talk to you about this at your PrEP appointments. You can also contact us if you have any questions.

### Does PrEP protect 100% against HIV, if taken correctly?

No- unfortunately not. It provides excellent protection, but does not quite reach 100%. Worldwide, cases are reported where people have been infected with HIV, despite taking PrEP as recommended.

### Does PrEP protect against other sexually transmitted infections (STIs)?

No. PrEP does not protect against e.g. syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia/ LGV, hepatitis C. We recommend therefore using condoms, in addition to PrEP. You should also test yourself regularly, especially if you have symptoms.

**Can I take PrEP if I am /want to get pregnant or am breastfeeding** If you do not have HIV, but have ongoing high risk for HIV infection, you can take PrEP (TDF/FTC), even if you are pregnant or breastfeeding. Contact us immediately to discuss PrEP if this is the case. ~~an issue~~.

### I don't think I need PrEP anymore-what do I do?

PrEP is not intended as a lifelong treatment and can be stopped if you are no longer at risk of HIV. We are happy to discuss this with you, but the decision to stop the treatment is yours.

E.g. If you enter an “exclusive” or “closed” relationship and want to stop PREP. The first step is to confirm you *both* are HIV negative. You AND your partner should have a negative HIV test 12 weeks from the last sex with a different person, before you have condomless sex with each other without PrEP.

If your life situation changes and you want to re-start PrEP (less than a year after stopping PrEP), contact us directly for a new appointment. If it is more than a year since stopping PrEP, you need a doctor's referral (henvisning) e.g. from your fastlege/ general practitioner to restart PrEP.

**For more information, frequently asked questions and a summary of relevant PrEP-articles check [www.olafia.no](http://www.olafia.no)**

# Olafiaklinikken

**Seksjonen er senter for rådgivning, undersøkelse og behandling av seksuelt overførbare infeksjoner**



Olafia Johannesdottir  
1863 – 1923

## Åpningstider (drop-in)

Mandag kl. 11:00 til 17:00  
Tirsdag - fredag kl. 07:45 til 10:30

## Kontakt oss

Telefon 23 07 58 40  
mandag– tirsdag - torsdag - fredag  
fra kl 08:00 - 11:00 og 13:00 - 15:00  
onsdag fra kl 08:00 – 11:00

## Besøksadresse

Trondheimsveien 2  
Bygg N, Oslo

## Postadresse

Olafiaklinikken  
Postboks 4763  
0506 Oslo

## Hvordan finne oss?

Trikk 17 til Heimdalsgata.  
Trikk 11, 12 eller 18 til Nybrua.  
Buss 30 til Herslebs gate

## Olafiaklinikkens internettside

[www.olafia.no](http://www.olafia.no)