

Information on PrEP, nPEP, and HIV treatments.

PrEP stands for Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis and is used for prevention. When folks engage in hi-risk behaviors that possibly expose them to HIV (MSM, IDU) they can take this medication to avoid seroconverting¹, even if exposed to the virus. Medication runs about \$1200 to \$1500 per month. It is covered by PHP/Medical, Covered CA plans (except Bronze), and some private insurances

nPEP stands for non-occupational Post-Exposure Prophylaxis and is used when someone has been, or fears having been exposed to HIV (such as rape, use of dirty needle, etc) to prevent the virus from seroconverting in their body. In the case of nPEP, it is **ESSENTIAL to get the patient in AS SOON AS POSSIBLE** since medication must begin **within 72 hours** of exposure. The price for this treatment, while high, can vary. However programs do exist to cover the expense.

HIV is treated using a combination of medicines to fight HIV infection. This is called antiretroviral therapy (ART). ART isn't a cure, but it can control the virus so that you can live a longer, healthier life and reduce the risk of transmitting HIV to others.

ART involves taking a combination of HIV medicines (called an HIV regimen) every day, exactly as prescribed.

These HIV medicines prevent HIV from multiplying (making copies of itself), which reduces the amount of HIV in your body. Having less HIV in your body gives your immune system a chance to recover and fight off infections and cancers. Even though there is still some HIV in the body, the immune system is strong enough to fight off infections and cancers.

By reducing the amount of HIV in your body, HIV medicines also reduce the risk of transmitting the virus to others.

ART is recommended for all people with HIV, regardless of how long they've had the virus or how healthy they are. If left untreated, HIV will attack the immune system and eventually progress to AIDS (www.aids.gov)².

The cost for HIV treatment varies depending on the type of insurance a person has, but thanks to Ryan White funding, no person will be turned away for inability to pay. Thanks to the AIDS Drug Assistance program (ADAP), individuals who earn under 500%FPL are eligible for HIV medications, and sometimes insurance premium assistance (such as help with copay) is available.

¹**Seroconversion** is the period of time during which **HIV** antibodies develop and become detectable. **Seroconversion** generally takes place within a few weeks of initial infection. It is often, but not always, accompanied by flu-like symptoms including fever, rash, muscle aches and swollen lymph nodes (Retrieved July 13, 2016 from [https:// http://www.aidsmap.com/Seroconversion](https://http://www.aidsmap.com/Seroconversion)).

²Overview of HIV Treatments. (n.d.). Retrieved July 11, 2016, from <https://www.aids.gov/hiv-aids-basics/just-diagnosed-with-hiv-aids/treatment-options/overview-of-hiv-treatments>).