

Is PrEP Safe? - PrEP, part 5



PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, is medicine for people who do not have HIV but are at very high risk for getting it from sex or injection drug use.

The most common side effects with PrEP are nausea, vomiting, rash, and loss of appetite. Some people also have mild headaches when starting to take PrEP. These symptoms are mild and usually go away within the first month.

Does taking PrEP long-term have harmful health effects?

In most people who are HIV-negative and have taken PrEP for up to 5 years, no significant health effects have been seen. However, PrEP can increase creatinine and transaminases in some people.



These are enzymes related to kidney and liver function. High levels of these enzymes can mean there has been damage to these organs.

So, while PrEP is generally easy to take, possible long-term side effects include loss of bone density, liver damage, and kidney damage.

This is why people taking PrEP need to be checked by their healthcare provider **every three months**.



If you are taking PrEP, you should tell your healthcare provider if you have symptoms that become severe or do not go away.

Be sure to get answers to any questions you have about HIV/AIDS. Your public health department, health care provider, and public library can help.