

Descovy® PrEP | (emtricitabine & tenofovir alafenamide)

This leaflet is designed to give you a general idea of the most important things you need to know about your new medicine. It is not supposed to replace the manufacturer's leaflet that comes with the medicine but is intended to be read alongside it. After reading this leaflet if you have any questions please ask your clinic team.

Clinic contact details:

What is Descovy® PrEP?

The Descovy® tablet is a small blue, rectangular-shaped, film-coated tablet written with "GSI" on one side and "225" on the other side of the tablet.



Descovy® for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a single tablet containing two drugs, tenofovir alafenamide (25mg) and emtricitabine (200mg) for the prevention of HIV. Descovy® can also be used in combination with other HIV medicines for the treatment of HIV. Descovy® 200mg/10mg which is grey in colour with a marking "210" is only used for HIV treatment not PrEP, if you have been issued this strength in error then please contact your clinic team urgently.

Please speak to your clinic team if you would like more information about how these drugs work.

Who is Descovy® PrEP for?

Descovy® is a newer version of standard PrEP (tenofovir disoproxil and emtricitabine) which is less likely to affect your kidneys or bones. It is recommended for people with, or at risk of, poor kidney health (either related to PrEP or another condition such as high blood pressure or diabetes) or poor bone health. Poor bone health could be for people with osteoporosis (a bone thinning condition) or for people under the age of 18, as adolescence is a critical period for bone growth.

How effective is Descovy® PrEP?

When taken correctly, Descovy® PrEP is comparable to standard PrEP in reducing the risk of acquiring HIV through sex. Please note that PrEP will only protect against HIV, it is important to use other forms of protection against other sexually transmitted infections.

DAILY dosing of Descovy® PrEP

- DAILY dosing of Descovy® PrEP involves taking ONE tablet ONCE daily.

Starting: On the first day it is recommended to start with a double dose (two pills) as this gives protection after two hours.

Stopping:

- If you are having receptive anal sex or insertive vaginal/neovaginal or anal sex, PrEP can be safely stopped if you have taken a single dose daily for TWO days after you last had sex.
- If you are having receptive vaginal or neovaginal sex, PrEP can be safely stopped if you have taken a single dose daily for SEVEN days after you last had sex.

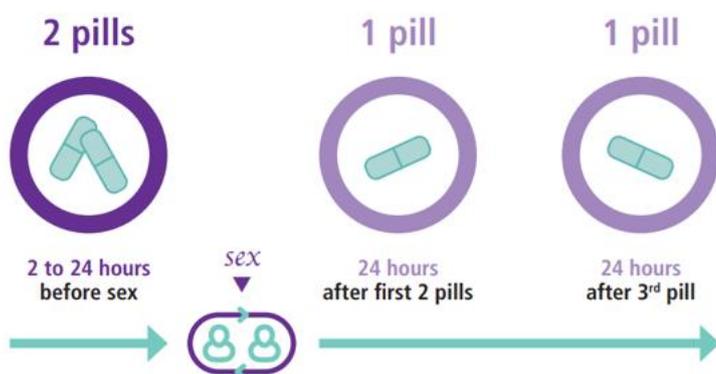
Event-based/on-demand dosing of Descovy® PrEP

- Event-based dosing involves only using PrEP when you have sex. Descovy® PrEP was taken daily in the initial studies, however high-quality drug-level studies support event-based/ on-demand dosing of Descovy®.

Event-based dosing is just as effective as daily PrEP. It is often used by people who have sex less often than once a week and who usually know when they might be likely to have sex. Event-based dosing needs fewer pills, but it can't be used if you have hepatitis B.

Anyone having receptive anal sex or insertive vaginal/neovaginal sex/anal sex (2:1:1 dosing):

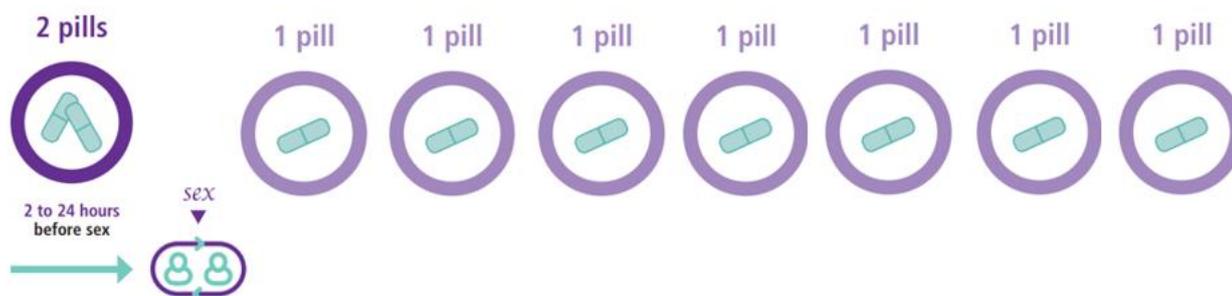
PrEP can be started with a double dose (two pills) 2-24 hours before sex and safely stopped with a single dose daily for TWO days after you last had sex.



Source: WHO 2019 <https://apps.who.int/iris/bitstream/handle/10665/325955/WHO-CDS-HIV-19.8-eng.pdf?ua=1>

Anyone having receptive vaginal/neovaginal sex (2:7 dosing):

PrEP can be started with a double dose (two pills) 2-24 hours before sex and safely stopped with a single dose daily for SEVEN days after you last had sex. 2:7 dosing needs to be used by cis women and trans and non-binary people who are having receptive vaginal/frontal sex.



What if I miss a dose?

Occasionally you may forget a dose. If this happens, please follow the guidance below and speak with your clinic as soon as possible.

Daily dosing

- Anyone having anal sex/insertive vaginal sex:
 - If seven days or fewer have passed since the last PrEP dose, PrEP should be resumed as prescribed.
 - If more than seven days have passed since the last PrEP dose, PrEP should be restarted with a double dose of PrEP. If you have had sex recently PrEP should be restarted as soon as possible (preferably in the first 24 hours after sex and no later than 72 hours), and continued daily while seeking advice from clinical services as you may need post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).



- Anyone having receptive vaginal /neovaginal sex:
 - If three days or fewer have passed since the last PrEP dose, PrEP should be restarted with a double dose.
 - If more than three days have passed since the last PrEP dose, PrEP should be restarted with a double dose of PrEP. If you have had sex recently PrEP should be restarted as soon as possible (preferably in the first 24 hours after sex and no later than 72 hours), and continued daily while seeking advice from clinical services as you may need post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP).



Event-based/on-demand dosing

- Event-based dosing really needs all the recommended doses.
- If you miss the BEFORE dose, still take a double dose as soon as possible AFTER sex, and continue single daily doses.
- Contact your clinic in case PEP is recommended.
- If you often miss doses it may be better for you to use daily dosing.

What are the common side effects with Descovy® PrEP?

If you have previously taken standard PrEP (emtricitabine/ tenofovir disoproxil), it is unlikely that you will encounter any new side effects when switching to Descovy® PrEP. Descovy® is associated with fewer side effects related to kidney and bone health compared to standard PrEP.

Some examples of the most common side effects are listed below (for a full list of side effects please check the manufacturer information leaflet):



'Head' side effects: Headaches, dizziness, tiredness or difficulty sleeping.



'Stomach' side effects: Feeling sick (nausea), vomiting, diarrhoea, feeling bloated or flatulence.

Other side effects: Rash or weakness

- If you vomit within 1 hour of taking the tablet then take another dose. If you continue to vomit please contact your clinic.
- Please do not crush the tablets, if you have trouble swallowing this tablet please contact your clinic team.
- Please ensure you bring your supply of PrEP if you are being admitted to hospital, you may not necessarily require this during your admission but if you have had condomless sex recently it may need to be continued to ensure that you do not miss any doses.

Can I take PrEP if I'm pregnant or breastfeeding?

If you become pregnant, are breastfeeding or planning to start a family, do not stop taking your PrEP. Speak to your clinic so that your care can be managed appropriately.

What medicines should I avoid with Descovy® PrEP?

It is important that you tell anyone prescribing medication for you about any medicines you are taking. This includes prescribed medicines, recreational or party drugs, and/or supplements you buy over the counter. Always tell your clinic team if you are taking any of the medicines in the table below (note this is not an exhaustive list of medicines):

Medicine	Why this is important
St John's Wort (a herbal remedy used to treat depression) Anti-TB drugs: Rifampicin & rifabutin Anti-seizure medicines e.g. carbamazepine, phenytoin. (Carbamazepine is also sometimes used to treat pain.)	Do not use these drugs as they can reduce the levels of Descovy PrEP in the body and can cause it to stop working properly.

What monitoring should I have with Descovy® PrEP?

We recommend 3 monthly sexual health screening including a HIV test – this can also be done via online home testing postal kits if available where you live. If you have issues with your kidneys, blood and urine tests are recommended every 3 to 6 months. It is helpful to have these tests prior to collecting further supplies of your medication.