1. **What is PrEP?**

   PrEP stands for "Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis." PrEP is an HIV prevention method where a person at risk of getting HIV takes a pill daily to lower their risk. The pill currently approved is called "Truvada." Truvada is one pill that is taken once per day, every day. It combines two drugs (tenofovir and emtricitabine) in a single pill.

   Check out this video: Women PrEP & Sexual Health

2. **How does PrEP work?**

   PrEP works because the drugs in the pill help prevent HIV from multiplying. If you are exposed to HIV, it is less likely it will be able to multiply in your cells, so there is a lower chance that you will get HIV. It is important to take Truvada as prescribed. In research studies, people who took the pill as prescribed decreased their chance of getting HIV by over 90%. Truvada will only work if it is taken correctly. **If you decide to take PrEP, you must take one pill, once a day, every day for it to work.**

3. **What else can I do to decrease my chance of getting HIV?**

   PrEP is one of many ways to decrease your chance of getting HIV. If your partner has HIV or you are unsure, condoms are strongly recommended. Condoms decrease your chance of getting HIV and a lot of other sexually transmitted diseases in addition to preventing pregnancy. No other form of birth control can decrease your chance of getting of HIV. A sexually transmitted infection (STI) increases the chance of both passing on and getting HIV. You and your partner/s should be screened and treated for STIs.

   If you know your partner has HIV, your risk of getting HIV is lower if they are taking their HIV medication correctly and have an undetectable viral load. When a person living with HIV takes HIV medication as prescribed it decreases the amount of virus in their body, making HIV harder to pass along through sex. Some women help their partner take their HIV medications correctly and follow up with their medical provider. Also, make sure your medical provider and your partner’s HIV provider know that you are HIV negative because this could affect the medications you both are prescribed.

4. **What are the risks of taking Truvada?**

   If you decide to take Truvada, you may experience some side effects. 10-20% of people experience nausea when they start. Other less common side effects include decreased bone mineral density (weaker bones) and liver or kidney damage. People who get HIV even though they are taking Truvada, have a risk that the HIV will become “resistant” against the Truvada, so other medications will be needed to treat the HIV. If you become pregnant or breastfeed while taking Truvada, your baby will be exposed to the medicines. There is no known increase in birth defects. Truvada is usually well-tolerated by pregnant women. You and your doctor can discuss the pros and cons of continuing or stopping Truvada if you become pregnant or are breastfeeding.

5. **How do I get started?**

   First, find a provider who is able to prescribe Truvada. Talk to your medical provider about benefits, risks and other ways to decrease your chance of getting HIV. If you and your provider decide that Truvada is a good option for you, you will need to have a blood draw before starting. You will be tested for HIV, STI’s and Hepatitis B and a test to make sure your kidneys are healthy. You can find a provider through this directory or contact Hive/Shannon Weber at 415-206-8919 or Shannon.weber@ucsf.edu.

6. **How do I pay for Truvada?**

   Some insurance companies (public and private) will cover the costs. Gilead (the company that makes the pill) provides Truvada through a medication assistance program to those who cannot afford to pay for it. Check out this brochure from Project Inform for more information.

7. **Where can I get more information?**


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**Questions?**

For more info, check out www.hiveonline.org