

Doxycycline Post-Exposure Prophylaxis for Preventing Sexually Transmitted Infections

Quick Facts for Patients

What is Doxy PEP?



Doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis (Doxy PEP) is a new way to take an existing medication. It means taking the antibiotic doxycycline after sex to prevent getting a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Doxy PEP has been shown to be effective at preventing common bacterial STIs including chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis in people who may be exposed to these infections more often.

Who is Doxy PEP for?



Doxy PEP is not for everyone. It is currently recommended for adult gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM) and transgender women (TGW) with a history of an STI, such as gonorrhea, chlamydia, or syphilis, within the last 12 months.

If you are a man who has sex with men or a transgender woman and have not had an STI within the last 12 months but will be participating in sexual activities that may put you at higher risk for exposure to STIs, talk to your doctor about whether Doxy PEP may still be a good choice for you.

When to take Doxy PEP

In order to be most effective at preventing STIs, it is best to take Doxy PEP as soon as possible after condomless sex.



- Take 200mg (two 100mg pills) of doxycycline within 24 hours but no later than 72 hours after condomless sex. Condomless sex means any oral, anal, or vaginal/front-hole sex where a condom was not used the entire time.
- If you have condomless sex again within 24 hours of taking doxycycline, you can take another dose of the medication 24 hours after your last dose. You can use Doxy PEP as often as **once every day**.
- **Do not** take more than 200mg (two 100mg pills) every 24 hours.

How to take Doxy PEP

Most people can take doxycycline with no problems. Before starting Doxy PEP, talk to your health care provider about any other medications you are currently taking. If you and your provider decide that Doxy PEP is right for you, there are a few things to know about how to take it:



- Take doxycycline with a full glass of water or other non-alcoholic drink.
- Avoid dairy products (like milk or cheese), calcium, antacids, and multivitamins for two hours before and two hours after taking doxycycline.
- Take doxycycline with food if your stomach gets upset by the medication.
- Wear sunscreen or sun protective clothing and limit the amount of time you spend in direct sunlight while taking doxycycline. This medication can make your skin more sensitive to the sunlight.
- Only take medication that was prescribed to you and do not share your Doxy PEP with others.

Be sure to let your provider know if you develop any side effects or have any other concerns after starting Doxy PEP.

Take care of your sexual health while using Doxy PEP

Doxy PEP is one tool that is available to help take care of your sexual health, but there other things you can do to prevent bacterial STIs and other infections that can be shared between sex partners. Those things include:



- Getting tested for STIs every three to six months or if you have symptoms that you think could be due to an STI.
- Talking to your doctor about what vaccines may also be right for you. Vaccines can protect against other infections such as mpox, HPV, hepatitis, or meningococcal disease.
- Talking to your health care provider about HIV testing, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), and post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) for HIV prevention if you are not currently living with HIV.
- Continuing your medication and following up with your provider regularly if you are currently living with HIV.

