



NORTHREACH

June 2020

Aware Newsletter

This month let's talk about PrEP!


What is PrEP?



Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis, or PrEP, is a medication taken before being exposed to HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus). The medication is used to protect the immune system against exposure to HIV and prevent transmission from occurring. This medication is currently an oral pill taken every day. It is very important that this medication is taken consistently for it to be effective in preventing HIV transmission. Some individuals have a hard time taking medication consistently for several reasons. Because of this potential for inconsistency, we are very excited to see that there are current studies on injectable PrEP, which would have to be administered every two months. We hope that this can become a reality to make PrEP more accessible for those who need it! The results of this study for injectable, bimonthly PrEP can be found on TheBodyPro and CATIE websites; the link to each website is at the end of this newsletter.

It is important to note that PrEP is not 100% effective in preventing HIV transmission. Because of this, it is recommended to practice other harm reduction strategies when in engaging in behaviour that could be high risk for HIV transmission. These harm reduction strategies include using condoms when having sex and using new supplies when injecting drugs (including needles, cookers, waters, tourniquets or alcohol swabs), and not sharing these supplies. It is also important to note that PrEP also does not provide protection against any other sexually transmitted infection and is not a form of birth control.



www.northreach.ca

Shell Place, Redpoll Centre
1 C.A. Knight Way
Fort McMurray, AB. T9H 5C5
780-791-3391 

9613 98 Street
Grande Prairie, AB. T8V 2E3
780-538-3388 
780-538-3368 



NORTHREACH

How can I get on PrEP?

Talk to your family doctor about getting a prescription for PrEP. If you don't have a family doctor, or aren't comfortable talking to them about it, you can call our Healthcare Navigator to be referred. Northreach staff are not able to prescribe PrEP, but we are able to set you up with someone who can! The Healthcare Navigator's phone number is 780-933-2341 and their email is healthcare@northreach.ca.

Your healthcare provider will ask you some questions to determine your eligibility for PrEP. These questions are used to determine what level of risk you are at for contracting HIV. PrEP eligibility criteria (taken from Alberta Health Services website) in Alberta is:

- Men who have sex with men (MSM), transgender women and gender diverse people reporting anal sex without a condom in the past 6 months and any of the following:
 - Chlamydia, gonorrhoea or syphilis infection in the past 12 months
 - Sex partner(s) known to be living with HIV who are not taking treatment, have HIV virus in their blood or don't know their HIV virus levels
 - Multiple sex partners
- Heterosexual persons in an ongoing relationship with an HIV positive partner who is not taking treatment, has HIV virus in their blood or does not know their HIV virus levels


Other individuals who may also benefit from PrEP include:



- People who inject drugs and share injection supplies
- Heterosexual persons engaging in sex with partner(s) who may be from a population or community with high rates of HIV

This eligibility criteria is also used to determine coverage for the cost of the medication. If you are eligible for PrEP and have Alberta Health Care, then you don't have to pay for it! When you see your healthcare provider to discuss PrEP, you will also be tested for HIV, Hepatitis A, B, & C, and other sexually transmitted infections. Your kidney function will also be tested.



www.northreach.ca

Shell Place, Redpoll Centre
1 C.A. Knight Way
Fort McMurray, AB. T9H 5C5
780-791-3391 

9613 98 Street
Grande Prairie, AB. T8V 2E3
780-538-3388 
780-538-3368 



NORTHREACH

Sources used for this newsletter:

Alberta Health Services. HIV Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/info/Page16048.aspx#:~:text=This%20includes%3A,in%20the%20past%2012%20months>


The BodyPro. Investigational PrEP Injection, Dosed Every Other Month, Holds Up Against Daily PrEP in Phase 3 Study. <https://www.thebodypro.com/article/investigational-prep-injection-holds-up-against-daily-prep>


CATIE. Long-Acting Injectable Drug Prevents HIV. <https://www.catie.ca/en/catienews/2020-05-27/long-acting-injectable-drug-prevents-hiv>

CATIE. Oral Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP). <https://www.catie.ca/en/fact-sheets/prevention/pre-exposure-prophylaxis-prep>



www.northreach.ca

Shell Place, Redpoll Centre
1 C.A. Knight Way
Fort McMurray, AB. T9H 5C5
780-791-3391 

9613 98 Street
Grande Prairie, AB. T8V 2E3
780-538-3388 
780-538-3368 