

What you need to know about PEP

What is PEP?

PEP (Post-exposure Prophylaxis for HIV) is a 4 week course of pills you can take if you have had a significant risk of exposure to HIV. The medication may stop you becoming infected with HIV.

How soon do you have to take PEP after you think you've been at risk of HIV?

PEP should be started **as soon as possible** because evidence suggests it is most effective when started within a few hours of exposure to HIV. PEP will **not be given** if it is **more than 72 hours** (3 days) since you think you have been at risk of HIV.

Where can you get PEP?

If you think you have been at risk of HIV exposure you should visit your nearest Sexual Health Clinic (**Sandyford**) to find out if you need and are suitable for PEP. You will be assessed and a HIV blood test will be taken.

To find out where your nearest Sandyford is call **0141 211 8130** or www.sandyford.org.

Now we have PEP is it so important to use condoms?

Yes. It is still important to use condoms because:

- Using a condom is more likely to stop HIV being passed on than PEP
- Condoms are easily available, whereas PEP may not be suitable and can be difficult to get.

Free condoms are available at over 200 pick up points.

You can check where at:
www.freecondomsglasgowandclyde.org or call 0141 211 6725.

How long do you have to take PEP for?

The PEP course of pills lasts 4 weeks.

It is important **not to miss any tablets** and to take the tablets at the **specified** times.

Does PEP have side effects?

You may have some side effects such as nausea, diarrhoea, headaches, tiredness. **Your doctor will discuss these with you prior to prescribing PEP.** You will need to have some blood tests taken during the PEP course to monitor its effects on your body.

If someone is taking PEP does it make them immune to HIV?

No. If you have unsafe sex (sex without a condom) HIV could get into your body, making PEP much less likely to work.

If someone stayed HIV negative after taking PEP and then had unsafe sex, they can become infected with HIV just like any other HIV negative person.

What if I am already HIV positive?

PEP is not suitable for you if you are already HIV positive. However, if you are concerned about transmission to negative partners talk to your HIV clinical service about the options that are available.

At evenings and weekends when Sandyford is closed you should go to your nearest Accident and Emergency department.

Your nearest Sandyford is:

Your nearest A&E is:

If you would like this document in large print, Braille, audio format or another language, please contact: 0141 211 6717.