

Doxycycline  
Post-Exposure  
Prophylaxis

# DOXY-PEP

# What Health Care Providers Need to Know



Department  
of Health

## What is Doxycycline Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (Doxy-PEP)?

Doxy-PEP is a self-administered antibiotic treatment taken after sexual activity. It is used to prevent syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea, which are bacterial sexually transmitted infections (STIs). Doxy-PEP is a proven biomedical intervention.

## How effective is Doxy-PEP?

Studies show that Doxy-PEP can significantly reduce the risk of contracting chlamydia and syphilis, and to a lesser extent gonorrhea, particularly for transgender women and cisgender men who have sex with men. These findings highlight the effectiveness of Doxy-PEP as a preventive measure for these bacterial STIs.

## Why prescribe Doxy-PEP?

New York State continues to see higher rates of STIs in young people, non-Hispanic Black individuals, and men who have sex with men. With the increasing rates of congenital syphilis, preventing STI acquisition among persons of reproductive capacity is a priority.

## How should Doxy-PEP be prescribed in a clinical setting?

- Talk to your patients about their sexual history, risk of STI acquisition, and the potential benefits/risks of Doxy-PEP, as well as other prevention options.
- Provide Doxy-PEP following a thorough sexual health risk assessment and a collaborative decision-making process with the patient. This discussion should cover the effectiveness and potential benefits of [Doxy-PEP](#), as well as other STI prevention options, such as condom use, partner notification and [Expedited Partner Treatment](#) or EPT.
- For questions regarding prescribing Expedited Partner Treatment or EPT for patients' partners taking Doxy-PEP, please refer to [hivguidelines.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/NYSDOH-AI-Expedited-Partner-Therapy\\_4-29-2025\\_HG.pdf](https://www.hivguidelines.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/NYSDOH-AI-Expedited-Partner-Therapy_4-29-2025_HG.pdf).
- Consider prescribing Doxy-PEP on an episodic basis for patients who anticipate times when their STI risk may be higher (e.g., group-sex events or engaging in multiple encounters with partners of unknown STI status).

- Offer Doxy-PEP to:
  - Cisgender men and transgender women who have had condomless sex with more than one cisgender male or transgender female partner in the past year.
  - Patients currently on HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (HIV PrEP), or who could benefit from HIV PrEP, as similar condomless sexual behaviors may put them at risk for other STIs, aside from HIV.
  - Although current literature is limited on the effectiveness of Doxy-PEP among cisgender women, transgender men and gender-diverse patients assigned female sex at birth, Doxy-PEP may be considered as a sexual health option through shared decision making between the patient and provider on a case-by-case basis.

## How should patients take Doxy-PEP?

- **Ideally, Doxy-PEP should be taken within 24 hours, but no later than 72 hours after condomless sex (oral, anal, vaginal).**
- Doxycycline can be taken every day depending on the frequency of sexual activity. However, **no more than 200 mg of doxycycline should be taken in a 24-hour period.**
- Milk and vitamins containing positive cations (e.g., calcium, zinc, magnesium) should be avoided within 2 hours of taking doxycycline, because these interfere with doxycycline absorption and may lower doxycycline levels, potentially reducing efficacy.
- Recommend that patients remain upright for 30 minutes after taking doxycycline to reduce pill esophagitis.

## What should providers know about prescribing Doxy-PEP?

- Ensure that patients fully understand the benefits, risks, and potential side effects of Doxy-PEP.
- Keep thorough records of patient discussions, consent, and treatment plans and address the possible risk of antimicrobial resistance for long-term use.
- Monitor patients regularly for side effects and ensure appropriate follow-up care.
  - Doxycycline can cause gastrointestinal adverse effects, photosensitivity, and esophageal irritation. Recommend taking with a sufficient amount of water.
  - Screen for syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, and HIV every three months at all anatomic sites of exposure.

## What patient counseling on Doxy-PEP should be provided?

### Follow-up and patient counseling are advised on:

- Risks and potential side effects of Doxy-PEP.
- Sexual health routine options to prevent STIs, including HIV, to those at risk of acquisition, including [Doxy-PEP](#), [EPT](#), [HIV PrEP](#), [HIV PEP](#), and [vaccinations for Hepatitis A and B](#), [Mpox](#), and [Meningitis](#).
- Pregnancy considerations: remind patients that doxycycline should be avoided during pregnancy. Counsel patients who could get pregnant to stop doxycycline immediately if they become pregnant.

## Where can patients find more information on Doxy-PEP or how to locate a health care provider?

- Visit [health.ny.gov/Doxy-PEP](https://health.ny.gov/Doxy-PEP) for Patient Information on Doxy-PEP
- Find a Health Care Provider at: [AIDS Institute Provider Directory](#) or [Find a Health Center \(hrsa.gov\)](#)
- Find a [Doxy-PEP \(Doxycycline Post-Exposure Prophylaxis\) Provider \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- [To get tested \(cdc.gov\)](#) for Sexually Transmitted Infections

## Where can health care providers access detailed Doxy-PEP guidance and resources?

- [health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/std/providers.htm](https://health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/std/providers.htm)
- [hivguidelines.org/guideline/sti-ept/](https://hivguidelines.org/guideline/sti-ept/)
- [hivguidelines.org/guideline/sti-doxy-pep/](https://hivguidelines.org/guideline/sti-doxy-pep/)



[health.ny.gov/PrescribeDoxy-PEP](https://health.ny.gov/PrescribeDoxy-PEP)