**PrEP/Truvada**

Brown Health Services Patient Education Series

*Brand name Truvada (tru va dah)*

*Generic name (Tenofovir 300mg / Emtricitabine 200mg)*

**Why is this medication prescribed?**

Truvada is one of several antiviral medications that may be prescribed to treat certain viral infections, including HIV. Truvada is now being used to help reduce HIV transmission in HIV negative individuals who have certain risk factors for acquiring HIV. PrEP, or pre-exposure prophylaxis, refers to the use of Truvada to help prevent transmission of HIV.

**How does Truvada help prevent HIV infection?**

The two medications in Truvada block important pathways that viruses use to set up infection in your body. If you take Truvada as PrEP, the steady presence of medication in your bloodstream can work to prevent the virus from establishing itself and slow the spread of HIV in your body. By itself, PrEP does not work all the time, so you should use condoms during sex for the greatest protection against HIV.

**How should this medicine be used?**

- You must take one table of Truvada daily at the same time every day.
- Do not stop taking Truvada without talking to your provider.
- When your monthly supply of Truvada runs low, contact your pharmacist to refill, so you do not miss any doses.

You may be at higher risk of becoming infected with HIV if you miss doses or stop taking Truvada every day.

**How long does it take for Truvada to become effective in my body?**

Preliminary data from studies conducted with HIV uninfected people show that maximum intracellular concentrations are reached in blood after 20 days of daily dosing; in rectal tissue at 7 days; and in cervico-vaginal tissues at 20 days. Therefore, although the exact time frame for efficacy is still under evaluation, a time frame of 20 days to achieve a steady state is used in clinical practice.

**What special precautions should I take?**

- Always tell your prescriber about any medications or herbal supplements you are taking, as they may interact with the Truvada.
- Tell your provider if you have any liver or kidney disease.
- Tell your provider if you become pregnant or breast feed.
- There is no special diet, or any dietary restrictions while on Truvada.

**What if I forget or miss a dose?**

Take the missed dose as soon as you remember it. However, if it is almost time for the next dose, skip the missed dose and continue your regular dosing schedule. Do not take a double dose to make up for a missed one.

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What side effects can Truvada cause?

Possible side effects from Truvada include:
- Upset stomach
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Loss of appetite

These side effects often fade during the first month of Truvada for PrEP. Tell your prescriber if any of these symptoms are severe or do not go away.

Call your prescriber if you experience fever, chills, sore throat, cough, rash or other signs of an acute infection.