

## INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

# HIV post-exposure prophylaxis - medicine information

You are being offered post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) medications because you are likely to be at significant risk of recent exposure to the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV). PEP consists of three medications that are active against HIV to try to prevent you from getting HIV infection. This sheet gives you more information about the medicines and their possible side-effects. You can choose whether or not you wish to start the recommended course of post-exposure prophylaxis.

If there is any risk that you could be pregnant, please advise the doctor before taking any of this medication.

### Introduction

You have been prescribed post-exposure prophylaxis because you may have been exposed to the HIV virus. Prophylaxis means a preventative treatment.

The treatment consists of a combination of two tablets, containing three active medicines. All three are antiviral medicines, which are effective against the HIV virus. Used together, there is evidence they can reduce the risk of developing HIV infection following exposure to the virus.

The names of your medicines are:

### Truvada



Each tablet contains emtricitabine 200 mg and tenofovir disoproxil 245 mg. They are blue, capsule-shaped, film-coated tablets, marked on one side with "GILEAD" and on the other side with "701". Emtricitabine and tenofovir interfere with the normal working of an enzyme that is essential for HIV to reproduce.

### Isentress



Each tablet contains raltegravir 400mg. They are a pink, film coated oval tablet, marked with '227' on one side. Isentress inhibits the enzyme HIV integrase, which stops the virus from multiplying in the cells. The drug aims to reduce the amount of HIV in the blood.

You have been supplied with a five-day starter pack, but the treatment will normally need to be continued for four weeks. You will need to make arrangements to attend the Genitourinary Medicine department (My Sexual Health) at King's Mill Hospital as soon as possible (definitely within four days).

Telephone 01623 672260 (automated system) select option 2 for an appointment for follow-up.

### Taking your medicines

For this treatment to be effective, it is important you take your medicines properly. Treatment should start as soon as possible after possible exposure to HIV.

Read the label on your medicines. They should be taken as follows:

Medicine	Morning	Evening
Truvada	Take <b>one</b> tablet with food at the same time each day.	
Isentress	Take <b>one</b> tablet with your breakfast.	Take <b>one</b> tablet 12 hours later.

### Truvada and Isentress

Swallow the tablets whole with plenty of water while sitting or standing in an upright position. It is important they are not chewed or crushed. Truvada can be dissolved in water, grape or orange juice if you find this easier.

Take Truvada with a light snack at **exactly the same time** every day even if you have not actually had a meal.

Isentress should be taken at the same time each day and can be taken with or without food. Taking the medicines at the same times each day is extremely important if they are to be as effective as possible.

One dose can be taken at the same time as Truvada if you wish.

If you forget to take a dose, take it as soon as possible and then continue as before. If you have difficulty remembering to take them, use an alarm, e.g. on your mobile phone. The Genitourinary Medicine department may be able to offer advice to help you remember your doses if you are having trouble with this.

You may drink moderate amounts of alcohol while taking these medicines (within normal recommended safe limits).

### Other medicines and medical problems

With this treatment, there is a risk of problems developing if you are taking other medication or if you have other medical problems (e.g. kidney or liver problems). You must tell your doctor about any medical problems you have, and about any medication you are taking, whether these are prescribed for you or bought over the counter.

Do not start any new medication without discussing it with your doctor first. If you do start taking any new medication, ensure that the doctor is aware that you are taking these tablets. The Genitourinary Medicine department may be able to help if you have any medication queries.

Just some of the drugs that are known to interact with these anti-HIV medicines include rifampicin (used for treating bacterial infections), aluminium- and magnesium-based antacids and other anti-virals such as lopinavir and telaprevir.

You should not breast-feed while taking these medicines.

#### **General advice:**

- Do not take more than the recommended dose.
- Do not give your medicines to others.
- Keep your medicines in a cool, dark, dry place, out of the reach of children.
- You are advised to use condoms during sexual intercourse.

#### **Truvada and Isentress side-effects**

Common side-effects of the medicines are nausea (feeling sick), diarrhoea, dyspepsia, headache, tiredness, weakness, and muscle aches. These usually settle if you keep taking the medicines as directed. Simple pain relief for headaches or muscle aches may help.

Serious side-effects are rare.

They include allergic reactions, kidney and liver toxicity, and reduced production of red blood cells (causing anaemia) or white blood cells (making you prone to infections).

Blood tests will be taken regularly to check blood counts and kidney, liver or other problems. Tell your doctor if you are concerned about any new symptoms.

**Please inform your doctor if a severe rash is accompanied by fever, muscle aches, mouth ulceration, conjunctivitis or lethargy as PEP may require discontinuation.**

#### **Pregnancy**

You must tell your doctor if you could be pregnant. You should take precautions to avoid becoming pregnant or fathering a child while taking the medicines.

#### **Contact details**

Genitourinary Medicine health advisors  
Telephone: 01623 672260 (automated system) select option 4 to speak with a health advisor.

Terence Higgins Trust  
Telephone: 0808 802 1221 for more information on PEP and where to get it.

#### **Useful websites**

<http://www.tht.org.uk/sexual-health/About-HIV/Post-exposure-prophylaxis>

<http://www.aidsmap.com>

#### **Further sources of information**

NHS Choices: [www.nhs.uk/conditions](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions)

Our website: [www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk](http://www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk)

#### **Patient Experience Team (PET)**

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

**King's Mill Hospital:** 01623 672222

**Newark Hospital:** 01636 685692

**Email:** [sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net](mailto:sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net)

If you need this information in a different language or format, please contact the PET (as above).

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