



Doxy-PEP fact sheet for healthcare providers in San Francisco

What is doxy-PEP?

Doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis (doxy-PEP) is using **doxycycline 200 mg within 72 hours after oral, anal, or vaginal sex to prevent the acquisition of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and syphilis.**

A recent study showed doxy-PEP was effective among men who have sex with men (MSM) and trans women living with HIV (62% reduction in acquisition) or taking HIV PrEP (65% reduction).¹ Efficacy against other bacterial sexually transmitted infections (STIs) is not known, and doxy-PEP does not prevent HIV, monkeypox (mpox), or other viral infections.



Who can take doxy-PEP?

Recommend doxy-PEP to gay, bisexual, and other MSM and trans women who:

- have had condomless sex with ≥ 1 cis man or trans woman in the past year, and
- have had an STI in the past year.

Offer doxy-PEP using shared decision-making to cis men, trans women, trans men, and other gender diverse patients who:

- have had condomless sex in the past year with ≥ 2 cis men or trans women regardless of STI history.

More data is needed on the efficacy of doxy-PEP in cis women.

The only study to date among cis women did not find doxy-PEP effective at preventing STIs, possibly due to adherence.² If prescribing doxy-PEP to cis women due to STI risk factors like multiple STIs or sex work, discuss lack of efficacy data and advise not to use when pregnant.



Dosing and prescribing guidance

- **200 mg of doxycycline taken as soon as possible** after condomless oral or anal sex, but **no later than 72 hours afterward.**
- **Doxycycline can be taken every day** depending on frequency of sexual activity, but **no more than 200 mg within a 24-hour period.**
- **Acceptable formulations:**
 - Doxycycline hyclate or monohydrate **immediate release 100 mg** (2 tabs taken together)
 - Doxycycline hyclate **delayed release 200 mg** (1 tab), but typically much costlier
- **Example Rx:** doxycycline 100 mg, #60, 1 refill, take 2 capsules (200 mg) by mouth as needed ASAP after condomless sex, and no later than 72 hours after. Do not take more than 200 mg in a 24-hour period.
- **ICD-10 diagnosis code Z20.2** (Contact with and (suspected) exposure to infections with a predominantly sexual mode of transmission).





How should I monitor patients taking doxy-PEP?

- **Every 3 months**, screen for gonorrhea and chlamydia at all anatomic sites of exposure, syphilis, and HIV (if not known to be living with HIV).
- **If a patient is diagnosed with an STI while using doxy-PEP**, they should be treated according to standard CDC STI treatment guidelines (www.bit.ly/STI_guides).
- **If a patient utilizing doxy-PEP reports:**
 - **exposure to a sexual partner with syphilis:** epi-treat for syphilis per standard of care.
 - **exposure to a sexual partner with gonorrhea or chlamydia:** consider waiting on epi-treatment until test results are back using shared decision-making with patient.



What should I counsel patients taking doxy-PEP?

- **Take doxycycline with fluids and remain upright for 30 minutes** after the dose to reduce pill esophagitis. Taking doxycycline with food may increase tolerability.
- **Protect against sun sensitivity.** Patients should be counseled to wear sunscreen and/or avoid prolonged sun exposure while taking doxycycline.
- **Avoid doxycycline during pregnancy.** Patients who could get pregnant should receive pregnancy testing and be counseled to stop doxycycline if they become pregnant.
- There is a rare risk of benign intracranial hypertension and other serious side effects.
- The unknown risks of doxy-PEP related to the microbiome and antibiotic resistance.
- Find detailed information in our patient-facing counseling handout and dosing instructions.



Offer comprehensive sexual health services

- **Offer HIV PrEP to all sexually active people** if they are not already taking it. Options include daily PrEP, 2-1-1 PrEP, and injectable PrEP.
- **Ensure people living with HIV are in care** and inform patients that maintaining an undetectable HIV viral load eliminates the risk of transmitting HIV to sexual partners.
- **Every 3 months**, screen for gonorrhea and chlamydia (using urine, pharyngeal, and rectal NAAT testing) and syphilis, regardless of HIV serostatus.
- **Vaccinations should be offered for eligible individuals.** These could include mpox (Jynneos), meningococcal (MenACWY), hepatitis A, hepatitis B, and HPV.



For detailed guidance, visit our website (sfcityclinic.org): www.bit.ly/doxy-PEPupdate or contact Alyson Decker: alyson.decker@sfdph.org

(1) Luetkemeyer AF, et al. Postexposure Doxycycline to Prevent Bacterial Sexually Transmitted Infections. *N Engl J Med.* 2023; 388:1296-1306.
(2) Stewart J, et al. Doxycycline Prophylaxis to Prevent Sexually Transmitted Infections in Women. *N Engl J Med.* 2023; 389(25):2331-2340.