

DoxyPEP

(Doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis)

Information for patients

What is DoxyPEP?

DoxyPEP is a way of taking an antibiotic called Doxycycline that can prevent you from getting Syphilis and Chlamydia. It should be taken after sex without a condom, and it can prevent over three quarters (around 75%) of these two infections but is not 100% effective. (This statistic does not include vaginal/frontal sex.)

Most Gonorrhoea in the UK is resistant to doxycycline, so DoxyPEP is unlikely to protect you against gonorrhoea. DoxyPEP does not reduce the risk of catching other STIs such as HIV, Hepatitis B and C, warts, crabs and scabies. You should still continue to test for STIs at the frequency advised by the team at Chalmers (usually 3 - 6 monthly).

How to take DoxyPEP

- Take DoxyPEP (2x100mg capsules of doxycycline) as soon as possible and no later than 72 hours (3 days) after anal/back or vaginal/front sex without a condom
- Do not take more than 200mg (two pills) every 24 hours
- If you are having multiple episodes of unprotected sex for a period of time you may wish to take it every 72 hours during that period of time
- You may wish to consider only taking DoxyPEP when you would consider the type of sex you are having to be “higher risk” such as group sex, chemsex or in public sex environments.

How to administer DoxyPEP and potential side effects

- Take 200mg of doxycycline (two pills) with a large glass of water
- Do not lie down for at least 30 minutes after taking it, so that it does not get stuck when you swallow it
- If feel sick or get stomach pains after taking DoxyPEP, taking it with food can help
- Some people are more sensitive to the sun when they take doxycycline, so wear sunscreen with a high SPF and avoid using sunbeds
- Avoid antacids, or supplements containing aluminium, calcium, magnesium, zinc or iron 2 hours before or after taking doxycycline
- Common side effects of DoxyPEP include feeling sick, headaches, stomach pains and heartburn
- DoxyPEP does not affect contraceptives, hormone replacement therapy, or PrEP.

Who should avoid DoxyPEP?

- If you have an allergy to doxycycline or other tetracycline antibiotics.
- If you take medications that may interact with doxycycline such as rifampicin (an antibiotic) Isotretinoin, (a treatment for acne), Warfarin (a blood thinner), Carbamazepine and Phenytoin (for epilepsy) and Ciclosporin (a medicine to suppress the immune system)

Speak to a doctor or nurse for advice if you take any other drugs or medicines or have other medical conditions.


Pregnancy and DoxyPEP

Doxycycline may not be safe throughout the whole of pregnancy or breastfeeding. Talk to your doctor, nurse or midwife before taking DoxyPEP if you are pregnant, think you may be pregnant, or are breastfeeding.

DoxyPEP unknowns and antimicrobial resistance

- We do not fully know how effective DoxyPEP is for stopping syphilis and chlamydia through vaginal/frontal sex as there is less research around this. However, we still recommend using it for vaginal/frontal sex if you are at higher risk of syphilis infection.
- We don't yet know if using DoxyPEP could make some bacteria that cause chest infections and skin infections develop antibiotic resistance. This could make these infections harder to treat in future.
- We do not know how DoxyPEP might affect the balance of healthy bacteria in our bodies or how this might affect our health.

Further information

<p>The Terrence Higgins Trust - How does DoxyPEP work? https://tth.org.uk/sexual-health/improving-your-sexual-health/doxy-pep</p>	
<p>Contact Chalmers Health Advisors on 0131 536 2108</p>	
<p>Contact the ROAM Team: roam.outreach@nhs.scot</p>	