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|----------|---|--|---|---|
| <b>P</b> |  | PEP involves taking anti-HIV medicine                          |  | The emergency room physician will decide if PEP is recommended. |
| <b>E</b> |  | PEP must begin within 72 hours (3 days) of exposure            |  | The medications may cause side effects                          |
| <b>P</b> |  | PEP consists of 2 antiretroviral medications taken for 28 days |  | PEP is not 100% effective                                       |

## WHAT IS POST-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS?

Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (PEP) involves taking anti-HIV medications as soon as possible after you may have been exposed to HIV to try to reduce the chance of becoming HIV positive. These medications keep HIV from making copies of itself and spreading through your body.

PEP should begin within 72 hours of exposure, before the virus has time to make too many copies of itself in your body. PEP consists of 2 antiretroviral medications and should be taken for 28 days. PEP is safe but may cause side effects like nausea and vomiting. These side effects can be treated and are not life threatening. PEP is not 100% effective; it does not guarantee that someone exposed to HIV will not become infected with HIV.

## WHO NEEDS PEP?

PEP is for anyone who may have been exposed to HIV during a single event. PEP can be used to treat people who may have been exposed during sexual assault.

PEP should only be used in situations right after a potential HIV exposure occurs such as sexual assault. It is not a substitute for other proven HIV prevention methods, such as correct and consistent condom use.

Because PEP is not 100% effective, you should continue to use condoms with sex partners while taking the medication. This will help avoid spreading the virus to others if you have become infected.

## **WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?**

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To be effective, PEP must begin as soon as possible (within 72 hours of exposure). Your healthcare provider will discuss whether PEP is right for you based on how you might have been exposed and whether you know if the person whose body fluids you were exposed to might be HIV-positive.

Before you are given the medication, your healthcare provider will need to run a few tests to see if you are healthy enough to take PEP. An HIV, pregnancy (if appropriate), liver, and kidney test will be done. An appointment will be made at the HIV clinic (Horizons or WSUPG) at the earliest possible time. These appointments are very important as PEP counseling and follow up HIV testing are necessary.

## **WHO PAYS FOR PEP AND WHERE DO I GET THE MEDICATION?**

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If you are prescribed PEP after sexual assault, you may qualify for partial or total reimbursement. If you are not insured, the clinic will be able to help you get the medication for free. If you do have insurance, the staff at the HIV clinic can help you reduce costs and copays for the medication, so it is important that you go to your appointment.

The emergency room will give you your initial dose of PEP medication and a prescription for the rest of the treatments. They will also provide you with a five day supply to ensure you have medication to take before your clinic appointment. The Special Projects staff will provide you with a list of pharmacies that have PEP medications.

## **WHAT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS?**

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Please contact the Horizons Clinic, WSUPG, or the Special Projects office if you have any questions or concerns regarding PEP or HIV.

## **IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION**

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### **Wayne State University School of Medicine**

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