

WHAT IS “nPEP”? Non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis (nPEP) is the emergency use of antiviral medications after possible exposure to HIV through sex or sharing of injection equipment, which may reduce the chances that you will be infected. This is in contrast to occupational post-exposure prophylaxis which refers to use of such medication when someone is exposed in the healthcare setting. It also differs from PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis), which is the long-term daily use of medication to prevent HIV infection.

WHO SHOULD TAKE nPEP? nPEP should be considered if you are HIV negative **and** within the last 72 hours you:

- may have been exposed to HIV during sex
- shared needles for injection
- were sexually assaulted

The decision to use nPEP is made on a case-by-case basis, depending on the potential risks of exposure to HIV balanced against the risks of taking antiviral medications and the costs involved. Please see the separate “Exposures and Risks” sheet for information regarding potential risks.

WHO SHOULD NOT TAKE nPEP? nPEP is not indicated in those who are already HIV positive, if more than 72 hours have passed since exposure, if the exposure can be categorized as “no-risk”, or after exposure to an HIV positive source whose viral load is known to be undetectable.

IS nPEP EFFECTIVE? Due in part to ethical considerations, no randomized clinical trials concerning efficacy of nPEP have been conducted. Observational studies, animal studies, and data from occupational PEP use in healthcare workers indicate that this is an effective method for prevention, but it is not 100% effective. Use of nPEP, under appropriate conditions, is recommended by the US CDC, World Health Organization, Australian Society for HIV, Viral Hepatitis and Sexual Health (ASHM), British Association for Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) and many other authorities. It is important to complete the full course of medication (usually 28 days) to maximize the chances of successful prevention.

HOW DO I GET nPEP? Timing is critical, as you must begin medication within 72 hours of possible exposure. After confirming the appropriateness of nPEP use, an initial panel of laboratory tests including a rapid HIV test will be done. If the rapid HIV test is negative, a 28-day supply of medication will be dispensed. Please note that the final decision regarding dispensing of medication for nPEP will be made by the physician. You will need to return to the clinic for follow-up testing at 4 weeks, 3 months, and possibly at 6 months.

WHAT ARE THE COSTS? Use of antiretroviral medications for nPEP is not an approved indication in Japan, so costs are not covered by National Health Insurance. The initial fee is ¥220,000~¥240,000 depending on the medications chosen, which includes assessment, baseline laboratory tests, and a 28-day supply of medication. Fees at the 4-week follow up are ¥10,000 yen and ¥4,000 yen at the 3 month follow up. Additional fees for testing/treatment may be necessary depending on your medical condition. Fees may change without prior notice. Consumption tax of 8% will be added to the total.

WHAT MEDICATIONS ARE USED FOR nPEP? In consideration of availability, ease of dosing, incidence of adverse effects, and costs, we have chosen a combination pill called Complera for nPEP use. Complera contains tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF), emtricitabine (FTC) and rilpivirine (RPV) in a single pill. While this medication is approved in Japan for use in treatment of HIV infection, it is not approved for use in prevention. As such, use for nPEP will be considered “off label”, and in the event of any serious adverse effects, you may not be eligible for government compensation programs. Complera is taken once daily for 28 days when used for nPEP. The medication will be dispensed at the clinic, but if Complera cannot be used for any reason, we will need to issue a prescription for a different regimen of medications. In this case, it may be difficult to find a pharmacy that can dispense such medications on short notice and the costs may be higher.

WHAT ARE THE SIDE EFFECTS OF nPEP MEDICATION? Complera, and most other medications used for nPEP are generally well tolerated. Nausea, fatigue, headache, diarrhea may occur, but are typically mild and temporary. Although rare, more serious complications, such as kidney or liver function abnormalities may occur, so it is important to return for follow up testing as scheduled.

CAN I USE nPEP EVERY TIME I HAVE SEX? nPEP is only for emergency use and is not for routine prevention of HIV infection. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), is a method that involves daily use of antiviral medication to prevent HIV infection. It is generally not available in Japan and we do not provide medication for PrEP at our clinic.

WHAT ELSE DO I NEED TO KNOW? While taking nPEP and during the 3 months after possible exposure, you should do the following:

- Take the medication as prescribed for 28 days
- Return for follow-up as scheduled
- Use condoms consistently
- Use birth control to avoid pregnancy
- Stop breastfeeding
- Stop needle sharing
- Do not donate blood or semen