



Department of Health

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Executive Deputy Commissioner

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Dear Colleagues and Community Members,

Due to ongoing media ads promoting lawsuits which claim harm to individuals from taking Truvada, (Tenofovir disoproxil fumarate/emtricitabine) it is incumbent upon the New York State Department of Health AIDS Institute to respond to the concerns of individuals who have, are, or plan to take Truvada as well as any concerns that their care providers may have in prescribing Truvada.

The AIDS Institute remains committed to our public health responsibility of promoting Truvada to help end the AIDS epidemic in New York State and to promote sexual health because:

- Truvada is a medication approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration for use both as HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and treatment of HIV. The FDA Drug Approval Package can be found at www.accessdata.fda.gov.
- Based on its review of the evidence, the United States Preventative Services Task Force issued a Grade A recommendation (meaning there is high certainty that the net benefit is substantial) that clinicians offer Truvada as PrEP to persons who are at high risk of HIV acquisition. The evidence summary supporting this recommendation can be found at www.uspreventiveservicestaskforce.org.
- A committee of expert clinicians within New York State developed clinical guidelines, based on extensive reviews of medical literature and evidence, that strongly endorse the use of Truvada as:
 - an effective, evidence-based biomedical intervention for HIV (see "[PrEP for HIV Prevention](#)"), and
 - a safe and efficacious option for HIV treatment (see "[Selecting an Initial ART Regimen](#)").

When used as either HIV prevention or treatment, a high degree of adherence to Truvada is important on the part of the individual to ensure that the medication has a chance to work. Routine monitoring and laboratory testing are important on the part of the care provider to ensure any side effects are managed and to ensure prompt treatment of any sexually transmitted infections.

Scientific evidence shows that when taken as directed, Truvada is safe and effective. Providers should always obtain informed consent before providing medical treatment. As there are risks to taking any medication, individuals should speak with their care provider about the benefits, risks (side effects), and possible alternatives for every medication they choose to take in order to understand the best choices for their specific situation.

The AIDS Institute will continue to follow where medical science and research leads us. Our commitment to maintaining access to all safe and effective medications for all New Yorkers remains unwavering.

Sincerely,

Johanne Morne
Director, AIDS Institute
New York State Department of Health

Charles John Gonzalez, M.D.
Medical Director, AIDS Institute
New York State Department of Health

For further reading, see:

www.positivelyaware.com/articles/truvada-safety

www.poz.com/article/behind-recent-media-ads-looking-plwh-people-taking-prep-side-effects-truvada