

Adelaide Sexual Health Centre

Consumer Health Information Sheet:

Doxy-PEP (doxycycline post-exposure prophylaxis)

This information sheet is intended for people who have been provided a prescription for doxycycline to be used as post-exposure prophylaxis (Doxy-PEP).

What is Doxy-PEP?

Doxy-PEP means taking an oral dose of an antibiotic called doxycycline after sex to protect against Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs), specifically syphilis and chlamydia. Doxycycline is a common medication used to treat certain infections, control acne, and prevent malaria. It does not work against viral infections such as HIV or herpes.

How does Doxy-PEP work?

Doxy-PEP works by preventing the growth of bacteria and reducing the risk of infection. It is not likely to be effective against gonorrhoea, so it is important to regularly test for STIs.

Taking this medicine does not guarantee that you will not become infected with syphilis or chlamydia, but it does significantly reduce the chances of becoming infected.

Doxy-PEP **does not** reduce the risk of passing STIs to others. Therefore, it is important to get tested regularly and treat any STIs promptly and use condoms consistently and correctly.

Safety information about doxycycline

- Do not take doxycycline if you have a known tetracycline antibiotic allergy.
- Do not take doxycycline after the 18th week of pregnancy as this can cause bone and teeth defects in your baby.
- Discuss the risks and benefits of taking doxycycline while breastfeeding with your doctor. Short courses are considered safe. Expert advice can be sought from the SA Pharmacy Medicines Information Service on (08) 8161 7555 (9:00 am to 5:00 pm, Monday to Friday).
- Consult your doctor or pharmacist if you are taking any of the following:
 - Vitamin A preparations and medicines for skin problems (e.g., isotretinoin, etretinate).
 - Warfarin, a medicine used to prevent blood clotting.
 - Penicillin's, another group of antibiotics (e.g., amoxicillin).
 - Epilepsy medicines (e.g., phenytoin, carbamazepine, phenobarbitone).

How to take Doxy-PEP

Take 2 100mg doxycycline tablets once within 72-hours (3 days) after having sex (oral, anal or vaginal sex). **Please see example below.**

Doxycycline is most effective when taken within the first 24 hours.



Example: sex on Friday, take dose by Monday

Example	Sex on Friday	Saturday (preferred day to take Doxy-PEP)	Sunday (can take Doxy-PEP)	Monday (last day to take Doxy-PEP)
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If you have multiple encounters over the weekend, you still only need to take Doxy-PEP once within the 3 days to help prevent transmission.

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- Do not take Doxy-PEP more than once every 3 days.
- Take doxycycline with food and a full glass of water to prevent stomach upset. Do not lie down for **at least an hour** after swallowing the tablets.
- Do not take antacids, iron, calcium, zinc or fibre supplements within **2 hours** of doxycycline as they may interfere with its absorption.
- Apply sunscreen when out in the sun to avoid sunburn.

Side effects

All medicine can have side effects. Sometimes they are serious, usually they are not.

- Common side effects of doxycycline are nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea
- Your skin may become more sensitive to sunlight, causing a rash or sunburn

Tell your doctor immediately if you notice any of the following as you may need urgent medical attention:

- Swelling of the face, lips, mouth, or throat which may cause difficulty in swallowing or breathing.
- Skin rash, itching or hives.
- Wheezing, chest pain or tightness.
- Severe upper stomach pain or cramps or
- Severe blisters and bleeding in lips, eyes, mouth, nose and genitals
- Your skin or the white part of your eyes turns yellow (jaundice).
- Your bowel movements (stools) turn light in colour or urine turns dark.

This list of side effects is not complete. There have been other side effects in people taking doxycycline. Tell your doctor or pharmacist if you notice anything else that is making you feel unwell, even if it is not on this list.

Is Doxy-PEP safe to take at the same time as PrEP for HIV?

Yes, it's safe to take PrEP at the same time as Doxy-PEP; in fact, all participants of the Doxy-PEP trials that led to this development were either taking HIV PrEP or HIV treatment.

For more information

Adelaide Sexual Health Centre

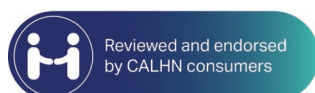
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This information sheet does not constitute medical advice and is for general information only. Readers should always seek independent professional advice where appropriate.



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