

Patient information: 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. It is not 100% effective but reduces the risk of syphilis and chlamydia. It is unlikely to prevent gonorrhoea and doesn't protect against other STIs including HIV. You should still have regular STI checks and attend sexual health services if you have symptoms of an infection.

How to take DoxyPEP

DoxyPEP is advised when you have had sex without a condom. Take 2 tablets (200mg) as soon as possible after sex and no later than 72 hours (3 days) afterwards. This includes oral sex. If you have sex again within 24 hours, take another dose 24 hours after the first dose. Alternatively, you can take a single dose after multiple episodes of sex as long as it is within 72 hours of all the episodes. Do not take more than one dose (2 tablets) in a 24 hour period.

- Doxycycline should be taken with a large glass of water.
- Taking it after food will help with side effects like feeling sick.
- Stay upright for 30 minutes after taking it.
- Some people's skin is more sensitive to the sun when taking Doxycycline so wear suncream with a high SPF and avoid using sunbeds.
- Avoid taking doxycycline within 2 hours before or after antacids or supplements containing aluminium, calcium, magnesium, zinc, iron or bismuth preparations.

Risks and Side Effects

Common side effects of DoxyPEP include sensitivity to sunlight, feeling sick, headaches, stomach pains and heartburn. Doxycycline might increase the chance of developing yeast infections (thrush). DoxyPEP is safe to use if you are living with HIV. It can be used in combination with HIV treatment. DoxyPEP does not affect contraceptives, hormone replacement therapy, or PrEP. If you have concerns about side effects, speak to a sexual health doctor or nurse for advice.

There is a possibility DoxyPEP could make some bacteria that cause chest and skin infections develop antibiotic resistance. This could make these infections harder to treat in the future. It is not clear what the impact will be. In people with a penicillin allergy, this may be more of a concern. We do not know how DoxyPEP might affect the balance of healthy bacteria in our bodies or how this might affect our health

When DoxyPEP should not be used

If you have an allergy to doxycycline or other tetracycline antibiotics. Doxycycline can interact with some other medicines if they are taken at the same time. Please advise the nurse or doctor of all other medications you are taking. Tablets that interact with Doxycycline include some other antibiotics such as rifampicin, Isotretinoin, a treatment for acne, Warfarin, a blood thinner, Carbamazepine and phenytoin for epilepsy and Ciclosporin, a medicine to suppress the immune system. Doxycycline may not be safe throughout pregnancy or breastfeeding. Do not use DoxyPEP during pregnancy or breastfeeding.