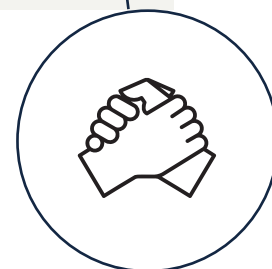
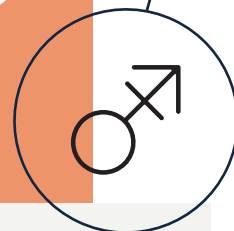


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# What does PrEP mean for people with HIV?



**PrEP is having a more profound and personal impact on our lives than we imagine.**

For many people with HIV, pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) has had seemingly little impact on our sex lives. Most of us have already adopted strategies for negotiating sex and for protecting our partners. We know that we cannot transmit HIV to a sexual partner if we are on treatment and have an undetectable viral load. And if we're detectable, we know there are alternative strategies.

Given that PrEP is aimed at HIV-negative people, there is very little literature that investigates it in relation to people with HIV.

A French study exploring the perspectives of HIV-positive gay men found that those they interviewed almost always made links between PrEP and treatment as prevention (TasP). For some, PrEP offered an extra layer of protection, but for one participant, the prospect of a partner being on PrEP made no difference to him as he was entirely confident that his undetectable viral load protected his partners from onward transmission (Brisson & Nguyen, 2017).

The HIV-positive men in the study did however share the hope that PrEP would remove the stigma they currently faced from some HIV-negative men; that it would create a sense of solidarity. And

it is in this context that PrEP is possibly having the most impact on our lives.

PrEP is most certainly creating a culture of shared responsibility. But it is that "additional protection against transmission" referred to by some men in the study that has the potential to give people with HIV a new sense of sexual liberation and freedom.

Enjoyable sex happens when we can openly explore all its different aspects: closeness, passion, adventure. However, experiencing sex in all these dimensions is compromised if we are at all anxious about transmitting HIV. And this anxiety is compounded if it is also felt by our negative partners.

We now know that treatment as prevention (TasP) works, that undetectable equals untransmittable (U=U) and that PrEP protects when taken as prescribed. As this understanding grows it is transforming our world and changing the way we relate to one another.

We are living in an exciting time: one where we have the chance to form more satisfying sexual and emotional relationships without the anxiety about HIV transmission.

**PrEP is a valuable resource. It not only prevents HIV transmission but shares that burden of responsibility, providing an even playing field and allowing people with HIV the opportunity to express our sexuality without prejudice.**



PrEP'D For Change is Australia's largest online community dedicated to sharing information, opinions and media about the game-changing HIV prevention strategy known as PrEP.

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