

Doxycycline Post-Exposure Prophylaxis (Doxy-PEP) – Clinician Guide



Background¹⁻²

- Bacterial sexually transmitted infections (STIs: that is, syphilis, gonorrhea, and chlamydia) are increasing in the United States.
- As these infections do not have vaccines, other preventative options would be helpful. Some of these preventative options can be provided over telemedicine.
- Doxy-PEP can reduce syphilis and chlamydia and gonococcus among men who have sex with men who have had a bacterial STI (syphilis, gonorrhea, or chlamydia) within the past 12 months.

Doxy-PEP Prescription¹⁻²

- Patients should take 200 mg of doxycycline within 72 hours after unprotected sex.
- Do not exceed 200 mg every 24 hours.

For Whom Should You Consider Doxy-PEP?¹⁻²

- Men who have sex with men who have had syphilis, chlamydia, or gonorrhea diagnosed in the last 12 months could use doxy-PEP as a postexposure prophylaxis.
- Patients who meet these criteria can be prescribed doxy-PEP to have on hand to take when needed.
- Readdress ongoing need for doxy-PEP every 3–6 months.

Telemedicine Appropriateness

- Consider where to perform testing for syphilis, chlamydia, and gonorrhea.
- Gonorrhea and chlamydia testing should be performed at sites of exposure (oral, anal, or vaginal) at time of doxy-PEP prescription and every 3–6 months afterward.
- Testing can occur over telemedicine in three ways:
 - Initial evaluation over telemedicine with in-person followup for sample collection.
 - Initial evaluation over telemedicine and laboratory followup for patient self-collected sample (FDA approval exists for urine and vaginal self-collected samples; some labs may also allow for self-collected samples at other sites of infection).
 - Evaluation over telemedicine with at-home patient self-collected samples (urine and vaginal self-collected samples).
- Perform screening for syphilis and HIV at time of exposure and every 3–6 months afterward or according to current recommendations, which may require visits to a lab.

Other Considerations¹⁻²

- Provide risk reduction counseling.
- Provide STI screening and treatment.
- Consider HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP).
- If the patient is HIV-infected, ensure linkage and retention in HIV care.

References

1. Bachmann LH, Barbee LA, Chan P, et al. CDC Clinical Guidelines on the use of doxycycline postexposure prophylaxis for bacterial sexually transmitted infection prevention, United States, 2024. MMWR Recomm Rep 2024;73(No. RR-2):1–8. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.rr7302a1>.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Preventing STIs with Doxy PEP. November 20, 2025. <https://www.cdc.gov/sti/prevention/doxy-pep.html#>. Accessed May 21, 2026.

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