

**Specialty Pharmacy  
Patient Information Packet**

**Vivent Pharmacy**

**Milwaukee WISCONSIN**

820 N Plankinton Avenue

Milwaukee, WI 53203

Phone: 414-223-6820

Toll free: 1-800-359-9272 ext. 6820

**Vivent Pharmacy**

**St Louis MISSOURI**

2653 Locust St

St Louis MO 63103-1411

Phone: 855-751-8878

Toll Free: 855-751-8878

**Vivent Pharmacy**

**Madison WISCONSIN**

600 Williamson Street, Suite H

Madison, WI 53703

Phone: 608-316-8612

Toll Free: 1-844-342-7294

**Vivent Pharmacy**

**Denver COLORADO**

4500 East 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 180

Denver, CO 80220

Phone: 303-321-0436

Toll Free: 1-800-483-0380



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# DESCRIPTION OF SERVICES



Brief review of  
available services.

## At Our Pharmacies We Believe...

- *in providing the highest quality pharmacy care*
- *in maximizing your health while minimizing your out of pocket costs*
- *support and adherence are hallmarks to positive care*
- *all patients deserve to be treated with respect and dignity*
- *in including all of our services in our standard of care at no additional cost*

## Geographic Service Area

- ◆ Our pharmacies currently serve patients claiming residency in the states of Wisconsin, Colorado, and Missouri.

## Specialty and Non-Specialty Medications

- ◆ Full service outpatient pharmacy – we can fill specialty AND non-specialty medications.
- ◆ We have American Academy of HIV accredited HIV expert pharmacists on staff to answer all your questions and ensure your medications are safe and effective.

## Patient Eligibility

- ◆ All People living with HIV and those taking Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) are eligible to use our pharmacies, regardless of where they receive their medical care.

## Getting Your Medications

### PICK-UP

- Pick up your medications at all of our locations, all with free parking. Call your pharmacy for more information on our free parking lots.

### COURIER

- Complimentary monthly medication courier services deliver your medications to your preferred address. Call your pharmacy for more information on courier options in your area.

### UPS and USPS MAIL

- UPS and US Mail options are also available free of charge to our patients.

## Financial Assistance

- ◆ We will explore all options to help you pay the least amount of money out of pocket for your medications. Our billing experts are skilled in utilizing resources such as copayment assistance cards, and patient assistance foundations.

## Personal Counseling

- ◆ One-on-one consultation to help you overcome medication side effects, drug interactions, and to help you reach your healthcare goals. Private consultation room available at your request.

## Speak with a Pharmacist

- ◆ Call your pharmacy and ask to speak with a pharmacist. Our pharmacists are available to you via phone, in person, or via email during all working hours.

## Emergency 24/7 Access

- ◆ If you have a pharmacy emergency **after business hours** please call 414-223-6800 (WI) or 303-393-8050 (CO) and ask to speak to the on call clinician. The clinician will forward communication to a pharmacist as necessary.
- ◆ If you are having symptoms of severe allergic reaction to a medication, symptoms such as: shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, or swelling in the face: **CALL 911 and get immediate emergency help.**

## Medical Home Services

- ◆ Our Pharmacies are part of the Medical Home model of care. Other medical home services include:
  - Food Pantry
  - Case Management
  - Medical Care
  - Insurance Specialist Advising
  - Dental Services
  - Mental Health Services
  - Legal Services
  - Needle Exchange
  - PrEP (Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis)
- ◆ Ask a staff member for Medical Home services available to you in your area.
- ◆ In addition, we are pleased to share that all the profits generated at our pharmacies are reinvested to expand our medical home services.

## Medication Adherence

- ◆ We provide tools to help make taking your medications as easy as possible such as free pill boxes, pill splitters, and keychain pill holders.
- ◆ We provide personalized refill reminders every month so you never need to worry about running out of your medications.

## Repository

- ◆ WISCONSIN ONLY: If you have unopened and unexpired antiretroviral medications that you would like to donate back to the pharmacy, please ask our staff about our Repository Program. Repository medications can be available to patients with valid prescriptions but inadequate medication coverage.

## Cost of Services

All of our pharmacy services are free of charge for eligible patients.

## SERVICES NOT AVAILABLE AT OUR PHARMACIES:



Special  
attention to Medicare  
Patients

### Medical supplies covered under Medicare Part B

- ◆ Our pharmacies are not an authorized provider of **Medicare Part B Medical Supplies**. If you have Medicare, we can fill your Medicare part D covered medication and we will assist you in finding a convenient pharmacy who can assist you with the Medicare B covered items.
- ◆ Medicare B items may include:
  - Diabetic test strips
  - Diabetic glucometer
  - Nebulizer machine
  - Nebulizer solution

## HOW TO:



How To's

### How to Place an Order, Obtain a Refill, or Check an Order Status

- ◆ Call your pharmacy and ask any pharmacy staff member. Our technicians are all cross-trained so they will be able to meet your needs right away.

### How to get information on prescription substitutions?

- ◆ Call your pharmacy and ask any pharmacy staff member.

### How to obtain medications not available at this pharmacy.

- ◆ We can order almost any medication you may need. However, if there is a medication we cannot make available to you at our pharmacy, we will work with you to find the most convenient pharmacy to you to enable access to the medications you need.

### How to Transfer a Prescription

- ◆ To transfer a prescription **TO our pharmacy**:
  - Tell any member of our pharmacy staff the following about the pharmacy you want the medications transferred FROM:
    - Pharmacy Name
    - Pharmacy Phone Number
    - Names or description of medications to be transferred.
  - We may need to request a new prescription from your medical provider.
- ◆ To transfer a prescription **FROM our pharmacy** to another pharmacy
  - Ask the new pharmacy to call us and request a transfer. Give them our
    - Pharmacy Name
    - Pharmacy Phone
    - Names or descriptions of medications to be transferred

### How to Dispose of Medications

- ◆ See Education section of this pamphlet and page title ["Tips on Safe Storage and Disposal of Prescription Medications"](#)

## How to Handle Adverse Reactions

- ◆ If you are having symptoms of severe allergic reaction to a medication, symptoms such as: shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, swelling in the face
  - **CALL 911 and get immediate emergency help.**
- ◆ Call your doctor if you have concerns about a side effect or reaction to a medication.
- ◆ You can report side effect to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088

## How to Report a Concern

- ◆ Please contact our pharmacy staff to discuss any concerns. Pharmacy Managers are available daily at all pharmacy locations.
- ◆ You may report concerns to the local State Board of Pharmacy:
  - Colorado: 303-894-7800
  - Missouri: 573-751-0091
  - Wisconsin: 608-266-2112
- ◆ Or the Accreditation Commission for Health Care (ACHC)
  - (855) 937-2242
- ◆ Please also see [“Patient Grievance Policy”](#)

## How to Handle a Medication Recall

- ◆ Our pharmacies follow all FDA medication recall regulations.
- ◆ If a Drug Manufacturer or the FDA issues a medication recall that requires action, the pharmacy will reach out to you to notify you that you have received a recalled product and we will work with you to create an action plan.

## How to get information on a bill or financial assistance

- ◆ Call your pharmacy and ask for the pharmacy billing specialist.

## How to access medications in case of an emergency or disaster

- ◆ We have pharmacy locations in multiple cities. If there is a natural emergency or disaster that requires your local pharmacy to be unavailable, we will use one of our other locations to fill your medications and ship to the address of your choice.
- ◆ Our organization’s policy on inclement weather is to close offices when the local public school district is closed due to snowy or icy driving conditions. You can be alerted to our closing by checking our website, Facebook page, or calling the pharmacy and receiving
- ◆ If you have a missed dose or missed delivery please contact your local pharmacist to determine the best plan of action.

## How to take good care of yourself

- ◆ See the [“Patient Education”](#) Section at the end of this packet to learn about:
  - Proper storage and disposal of medications.
  - Preventing infections by washing hands and covering coughs.
  - How to be ready for an emergency.
  - Medication adherence and lab results.
  - Common questions about prevention.

## LOCATIONS AND HOURS:

### Milwaukee WISCONSIN

820 N Plankinton Ave.

Milwaukee, WI 53203

Phone: 414-223-6820

Toll free: 1-800-359-9272 ext 6820

Fax: 414-223-6821

#### HOURS:

**Monday – Thursday: 8:30am - 5:30pm**

**Friday: 8:30am – 5:00pm**

### Denver COLORADO

4500 East 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 180

Denver, CO 80220

Phone: 303-321-0436

Toll Free: 1-800-483-0380

Fax: 303-322-3406

#### HOURS:

**Monday – Friday: 9:00am - 5:30pm**



Note the  
hours, contact info,  
and closed holidays  
for your location.

### Madison WISCONSIN

600 Williamson Street, Suite H

Madison, WI 53703

Phone: 608-316-8612

Toll Free: 1-844-342-7294

Fax: 608-268-7680

#### HOURS:

**Monday – Friday: 8:30am - 5:00pm**

### St Louis MISSOURI

2653 Locust St

St Louis MO 63103-1411

Phone: 855-751-8878

Toll Free: 855-751-8878

Fax: 833-529-0573

#### HOURS:

**Monday – Friday: 8:00am - 5:30pm**

### HOLIDAYS OBSERVED:

All of our Pharmacy locations will be closed on the following holidays:

Holiday	Date	Closed For
New Year's Day	January 1	Full Day
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	3 <sup>rd</sup> Monday of January	Full Day
Memorial Day	Last Monday in May	Full Day
Independence Day	July 4	Full Day
Labor Day	First Monday in September	Full Day
Thanksgiving	4 <sup>th</sup> Thursday in November	Full Day
Thanksgiving Friday	4 <sup>th</sup> Friday in November	the afternoon
Christmas Eve	December 24	the afternoon
Christmas Day	December 25	Full Day
New Year's Eve	December 31	the afternoon



# PATIENT RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Updated DEC 2018

*(To be translated or read aloud to client/patient if they are unable to read or understand this document)*



Patient Rights and Responsibilities are listed here. If you have any questions please ask a staff member. Please review and sign off on the Signature Form.

**Service Rights:** Each patient/client receiving services from Vivent Health has the following rights:

- To be fully informed, as evidenced by the patient's/client's written acknowledgment at the time of enrollment and during the course of services, of these rights and responsibilities;
- To be fully informed, at the time of admission and during the course of service, of the services and financial benefits available at this agency;
- To voice opinions, concerns, or complaints, and recommend changes in policies and services, through appropriate staff;
- To file a grievance which will be responded to according to Vivent Health Grievance Procedures.
- To access eligible services regardless of ability to pay or past health condition.

**Service and Treatment:** Each patient/client enrolled in or receiving relevant Vivent Health services has the following rights:

- To be fully informed of available psychosocial and medical interventions; given the opportunity to participate in the planning of interventions; and may refuse interventions recommended by staff;
- To choose a licensed, certified, or registered health care provider as feasible;
- To receive adequate and appropriate professional service within the capacity of the agency and be informed of any limitations of Vivent Health services;
- To participate in the development and periodic revision of treatment and service plans.
- To confidential protection of records and to refuse their release to any individual or entity outside the agency, except as required or allowed by law;
- To choose preferred and reasonable methods of communication with Vivent Health staff, when reasonable;
- To be free from discrimination based on age, arrest/conviction record, national origin, ethnicity, race, sex, color, gender identity, ancestry, disability, marital status, pregnancy, religion, sexual orientation, or other protected category;
- To be informed of the identity and role of staff responsible for service or care, and the identity and role and status of others involved in interventions;
- To obtain reasonable access to their own health information and request amendment to it, as permitted under applicable law;
- To designate a person(s) who will participate in discussions with providers for medical care, dental care, housing assistance, legal assistance, testing, and case management. Participation in care decisions by persons other than a patient receiving mental health care will be determined by the mental health care provider, as appropriate;
- Upon request, to be informed both orally in writing, in advance of the care being provided, of the charges, including payment for care/service expected from third parties, when possible, and any estimated charges for which the client/patient may be responsible;
- To receive services in a safe, secure, confidential, respectful and accessible environment.
- To receive meaningful access to services and treatment, regardless of limited English proficiency, including oral interpretation and translated vital documents in a language or format understandable to the client/patient
- To receive accessible and reasonable services and treatment regardless of disability.
- To dis-enroll or opt out of any service or program, including the HIV Medical Home.

**Patient/Client Responsibilities:** Each patient/client receiving services has the following responsibilities:

- To follow the service plan recommended by staff and agreed to by the patient/client. This may include following instructions of affiliated health professionals;
- To inform the service provider immediately if instructions are not understood, or if they cannot be completed;
- To ask about possible results or outcomes, should interventions or instructions not be followed;
- To supply accurate and complete information about conditions, concerns, complaints, and difficulties relating to needs;
- To provide Vivent Health staff with information and documentation to assist with program eligibility, such as proof of income, residency and insurance.
- To notify the program staff of any change in status (including address, phone, finances, benefits, health, service needs);
- To notify the program staff of any desire to dis-enroll or opt out from any service or program.
- To follow agency rules and regulations, and to be considerate of the rights, privacy, and property of other patients/clients and of agency staff and volunteers.

# NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

Updated January 1, 2020

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW HEALTHCARE INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU CAN GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

At Vivent Health we are grateful for the trust you place in us to provide you with health services. Our organization is required by law to maintain the privacy of your Protected Health Information (PHI) and to provide you with a notice that describes our organization's legal duties and privacy practices and your privacy rights with respect to your health information. Vivent Health is committed to keeping your personal health information confidential and we will follow the privacy practices described in this notice. We believe that protecting your privacy is one of our most important responsibilities.

Because you have entrusted our organization to protect your privacy, we want to provide you with a complete explanation of how your personal health information may be used and to whom it may be disclosed. We will explain the use and disclosure of your health information when needed for your treatment, payment for health care or other health care operations, and when required or allowed by law. We will also explain your rights to access and control how your personal health information is used.

Personal health information is about you. It includes health information that identifies who you are and may include your contact information; your past, present or future health conditions; and the health care services that you receive. It is important that you carefully review the information we are providing you. If you have any questions or if you prefer that we not use or disclose your personal health information in the manner that we describe, please contact the Health Services Administrator in your state:

## WISCONSIN

820 North Plankinton Avenue  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53203  
414-225-1639

## MISSOURI

2653 Locust Street  
St. Louis, Missouri 63103  
855-751-8879

## COLORADO

4545 East 9th Avenue; Suite #120  
Denver, Colorado 80220  
303-393-8050

## YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION & ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORD

Each time you visit a hospital, medical clinic, physician, dentist, mental health therapist, pharmacy, or other healthcare provider, a record of your visit is made. Typically, this record contains your symptoms, examinations and test results, diagnoses, and details on current or future care or treatment. This information, often referred to as your healthcare or medical record, serves as:

- Basis for planning your care and treatment
- Means of communication among the many health professionals who contribute to your care
- Legal document describing the care you received
- Means by which your third party payer can verify that services billed were actually provided
- Tool in educating health professionals
- Source of information for public health officials charged with improving the health of the nation
- Source of data for facility planning and marketing
- Tool with which we can assess and continually work to improve care and health outcomes.

Understanding what is in your record and how your health information is used helps you to:

- Ensure accuracy
- Better understand who, what and why others may access your health information
- Make more informed decisions when authorizing disclosure to others

## ALL ELECTRONIC HEALTH RECORDS

Our organization is part of an organized health care arrangement, the Oregon Community Health Information Network (OCHIN) for electronic health record and other purposes. A current list of OCHIN participants is available at <https://ochin.org/member-map>. As a business associate of our organization, OCHIN supplies information technology and related services to us and other OCHIN participants utilizing Epic and other software. OCHIN also engages in quality assessment and improvement activities on behalf of its participants. For example, OCHIN coordinates clinical review activities on behalf of participating organizations to establish best practice standards and assess clinical benefits that may be derived from the use of electronic health record systems. OCHIN also helps participants work collaboratively to improve the management of internal and external patient referrals. Your health information may be shared by us with other OCHIN participants when necessary for health care operation purposes of the organized health care arrangement.



We follow all HIPAA patient privacy laws. This policy outlines all of our privacy practices. If you have any questions about our privacy practices, please ask a staff member. Please review and sign off on the signature form.

## HEALTH INFORMATION EXCHANGES

Our organization also participates in various Health Information Exchanges (HIEs) or similar arrangements for treatment, operations and payment purposes. For example, we participate in the Wisconsin Statewide Health Information Network (WISHIN) for Wisconsin patients. In compliance with federal and state laws, we may make your Protected Health Information (PHI) available electronically through HIEs and similar arrangements to select health care providers that may request your information for purposes of treatment; and to public health entities as permitted by law. Our organization may access your PHI from other HIE participants for treatment and healthcare operations purposes. Our participation may be able to assist in avoiding medical errors during a health emergency. For example, an emergency room physician with access to an HIE may access PHI from our organization for the purposes of providing emergency care.

Our organization also participates in immunization registries to enable your health care providers to locate needed information concerning your immunizations. For example, if you receive a vaccination for Hepatitis A at one of our clinics that information may be accessible to external health providers who also provide care for you.

## HOW WE MAY USE AND DISCLOSE YOUR PERSONAL HEALTH INFORMATION

The following categories describe some of the different ways that we may use and disclose healthcare information without obtaining written authorization.

**For Treatment.** Our organization may use health information about you to provide, coordinate and manage your treatment or services internally and externally. We may disclose healthcare information about you to other doctors, pharmacists, nurses, behavioral health providers, lab technicians, case managers, patient services representatives, legal staff, medical, dental, nursing, pharmacy students, or others as needed who are involved in your care and services. For example, a laboratory or medical specialist may need to know information about you to run tests or to provide treatment, or a patient services representative or other staff may need to access your record to set-up and coordinate your appointments.

We may also provide subsequent healthcare providers with copies of various reports that may assist them in treating you. For example, your healthcare information may be provided to a physician to whom you have been referred so that the physician has important information regarding your previous treatment, diagnoses, or medications.

**For payment.** We may use and disclose healthcare information about your treatment and services to bill and collect payment from you, your insurance company, or a third party payer such as Medicaid or Medicare. For example, we may need to give your insurance company information before it approves or pays for the health care services we recommend for you. The insurance company may use that information to make a determination of eligibility or when undertaking review activities.

For example, obtaining approval for a medical procedure may require that your health information be disclosed to the health plan to obtain approval for the hospital admission.

**For Health Care Operations.** We may use or disclose, as needed, your health information in order to support our business activities. These activities may include, but are not limited to, quality assessment and improvement, financial audits, employee performance reviews, scheduling, student training, licensing and accreditation, marketing, legal advice, accounting support, healthcare records storage, transcription, complaint resolution, and other agency operations. For example, we may provide your contact information to a third party patient evaluation organization to conduct a survey to assist us in care improvement.

**Research.** Under certain circumstances, we may use and disclose health information about you for research purposes. For example, a research project may involve comparing the health and recovery of all individuals who receive one medication to those who receive another. All research projects, however, are subject to a special approval process to ensure adherence to privacy rules and those who receive this information are obligated to maintain its confidentiality under federal and state laws. Lastly, if certain criteria are met, we may disclose your health information to researchers after your death when it is necessary for research purposes.

## USES AND DISCLOSURES MADE WITH YOUR CONSENT OR OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECT

**Individuals Involved in Your Care or Payment for Your Care.** If you do not object and the situation is not an emergency, and disclosure is not otherwise prohibited by law, privacy laws permit us to use professional judgment to disclose information to family members, relatives, close friends, or others involved in your care or helping you pay your medical bills.

**Communications.** We will communicate to you via all means including mailings, through electronic communications such as telephone, text, voicemail or email, or any other means regarding, but not limited to: treatment options, appointment reminders, prescriptions and medicines, information on health-related benefits or services, disease-management programs, policy changes or announcements, wellness programs; to assess your satisfaction; to remind you of appointments; as part of fund raising efforts; for population-based activities relating to training programs or reviewing competence of health care professionals; or other community based initiatives or activities in which we are participating.

If you are not interested in receiving certain communications or materials, please contact your local Health Services Administrator. Vivent Health will review all reasonable requests. However, for billing we must have an address to send bills to you. If you would prefer your bills to be mailed to an alternative address please contact your local Health Services Administrator.

#### USES AND DISCLOSURES MADE WITHOUT YOUR AUTHORIZATION OR OPPORTUNITY TO OBJECT

The following categories describe the ways our organization may use and disclose your health information without your authorization and without providing you an opportunity to object:

- When required by law, including law enforcement, court order, judicial or administrative proceedings, or other requirements
- Public health authorities, including local, state or federal agencies as required
- Health care oversight agencies authorized for audits, investigations or other proceedings
- For judicial and administrative proceedings
- Law enforcement authorities
- Government authorities involving victims of abuse, neglect or violence
- Coroners, medical examiners and funeral directors
- Organ, eye or tissue donation services
- Workers compensation agents
- Specialized government functions, such as national security, military and public safety authorities
- Averting health and safety threats to a person or the general public
- Disaster relief efforts
- Other areas as provided by law

#### WHEN WE MAY NOT USE OR DISCLOSE YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION

Except as provided in this Notice of Privacy Practices or as required or allowable by law, our organization will not use or disclose your health information without written authorization from you. If you do authorize our organization to use or disclose your health information for another purpose, you may revoke your authorization in writing at any time. If you revoke your authorization, we will no longer be able to use or disclose health information about you for the reasons covered by your written authorization, though we will be unable to recover or take back any disclosures we have already made.

#### YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION RIGHTS

**You Have the Right to Request Restrictions on Certain Uses and Disclosures.** You have the right to request a restriction or limitation on the healthcare information we use or disclose about you for treatment, payment or health care operations.

You also have the right to request a limit on the healthcare information we disclose about you to someone who is involved in your care or the payment for your care, like a family member or friend. For example, you could ask that we not use or disclose information about a procedure that you had. We ask that you submit these requests in writing to your local Health Services Administrator. Our organization is not required to agree in all circumstances to requested use or disclosure restrictions unless required by law. If we do agree, we will comply with your reasonable request except in certain situations such as emergency treatment, health and safety concerns, seeking payment, or other practicalities.

**You Have the Right to Request Confidential Communication.** You have the right to make reasonable requests that we communicate with you about healthcare matters in a certain way or at a certain location. We will agree to the request to the extent that it is reasonable for us to do so. For example, you may ask that we use an alternative address for billing purposes or that we communicate with you through unencrypted email. We ask that you submit these requests in writing to our Health Services Administrator.

**You Have the Right to Inspect and Copy Your Health Information.** You have the right to inspect and receive a copy of your healthcare information. We ask that you submit these requests in writing. Usually, this includes medical and billing records, but does not include psychotherapy notes or information compiled in reasonable anticipation of, or for use, a civil, criminal, or administrative action or proceeding. Reasonable requests for access to and copies of your healthcare information must be submitted in writing to our Health Services Administrator. We may charge a reasonable fee to cover the costs of copying these records.

**You have the Right to Request an Amendment to Your HealthCare Information.** If you feel that healthcare information we have about you is incorrect or incomplete, you may ask us to amend the information by submitting a request and reason(s) in writing to our Health Services Administrator. You have the right to request an amendment for as long as we keep the information. We may deny your request for an amendment and if this occurs, you will be notified of the reason for the denial.

**You Have the Right to an Accounting of Disclosures.** You have the right to make a reasonable request for a list of certain disclosures that we have made of your health information. To request this list of disclosures, you must submit your request in writing to your local Health Services Administrator. Your request must state a time period, which may not be longer than six years from the date of the request. Your request should indicate in what form you want the list (for example, on paper, electronically). The first list you request within a twelve-month period will be free. For additional lists during the same twelve-month period, we may charge you for the costs of providing the list. We will notify you of the cost

involved and you may choose to withdraw or modify your request at that time before any costs are incurred. We must comply with your reasonable request for a list within 60 days, unless you agree to a 30-day extension.

**You Have the Right to be Notified of a Breach.** We are required by law to notify you following a breach of unsecured protected health information within the parameters of HIPAA or other relevant privacy laws.

**You Have the Right to a Paper Copy of this Notice of Privacy Practices.** You have the right to a paper copy of this notice, which is also available at <http://www.ViventHealth.org/privacy-notice>. You may ask us to give you a copy of this notice at any time. To exercise any of your rights, please obtain the required form from our Health Services Administrator and submit your request in writing.

#### CHANGES TO THIS NOTICE

Vivent Health reserves the right to change this Notice of Privacy Practices. We reserve the right to make the revised Notice effective for health information we already have about you as well as any information we receive in the future. Any updated Notice will be available upon request, in our office, and on our website. The Notice will contain the effective date on the first page. In addition, if we make material changes to the Notice, we will offer you a copy of the current Notice in effect.

#### COMPLAINTS

If you believe your privacy rights have been violated, you may file a written complaint with the Vivent Health Privacy Officer. All complaints must be submitted in writing. You will not be penalized for filing a complaint. You may also file a complaint with the Federal Department of Health and Human Services.

Vivent Health Privacy Officer 648 N. Plankinton Ave Milwaukee, WI 53203

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights, Region V  
233 N. Michigan Ave, Suite 240  
Chicago, IL 60601  
1-866-627-7748

#### AVAILABILITY OF THIS NOTICE

Our organization provides this Notice of Privacy Practices to all patients. This Explanation is posted in all organization patient care locations and on the agency website at <http://www.ViventHealth.org/privacy-notice>.

# PATIENT GRIEVANCE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Updated November 2018



Patients have a right to file a complaint, and the process for how to file a complaint is outlined here. Please review and sign off on the signature form.

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Vivent Health Patient Grievance Procedure is to work to resolve grievances related to Vivent Health service delivery. Vivent Health will respond to a grievance in a timely and effective manner to assure that conflicts are resolved and consumer service needs are met.

## **POLICY**

Consumers have the right to file a grievance related to any Vivent Health program or service. The grievance procedure will assist those who have complaints related to accessing or receiving any Vivent Health services.

In filing a grievance, patients/clients are assured that:

- ☒ there will be no repercussions from Vivent Health staff, volunteers, or other service users;
- ☒ services will continue to be provided to them without interruption or discrimination;
- ☒ the grievance procedure is confidential;
- ☒ there is no cost to consumers to file a grievance.

Vivent Health will assist the patient/client through the steps of the grievance procedure. A person filing a grievance may be represented by a parent or a legal guardian.

Grievances should be filed within 90 days of the incident or from the time the patient/client learned of the incident. The time limit can be extended for good cause including incarceration, poor health, hospitalization, or other items.

All grievances and steps to resolve them will be documented in the Vivent Health Grievance Log maintained by the state VP of Operations (Health and Social Services) or Director of Pharmacy Services (Pharmacy). Any Vivent Health staff member receiving a completed, signed grievance - either one filled out by the patient/client or an oral grievance written down by a staff person and then signed by the complainant - will forward this information to the VP of Operations or Director of Pharmacy Services within 24 hours.

The Vivent Health grievance procedure is intended to address issues of merit in a confidential manner. Vivent Health reserves the right to reject frivolous or unmeritorious grievances and to reject grievances that are not held in confidence by the consumer, parent, or legal guardian. The decision to reject grievances due to lack of merit or frivolity will be made by the Program Director. All rejected grievances will be filed, with an explanation for the rejection, in the Grievance Log.

## **PROCEDURE**

Patients/Clients can file their complaint with Vivent Health staff in writing or verbally. If a grievance is filed verbally, Vivent Health staff will put the basis and major points of the complaint in writing and the complainant will then sign the grievance prior to Vivent Health proceeding with it.

**Step 1:** The patient/client will complete the Vivent Health Grievance Report Form and present it for discussion to the primary service delivery staff person. Through discussion, resolution of issues will be pursued. If the grievance cannot be resolved through discussion, or if the grievance directly involves the service delivery staff person, proceed to step 2.

**Step 2:** The patient/client will complete and present the Vivent Health Grievance Report Form to the appropriate supervisory staff. The appropriate supervisor will contact the complainant within 5 working days of receipt of the grievance to investigate and discuss the issue of the grievance and attempt resolution. The appropriate supervisor will then respond in writing to the complainant, within 5 working days of the discussion with the complainant, with a strategy to resolve the grievance.

**Step 3:** The patient/client will complete and present the Vivent Health Grievance Report Form to the appropriate Program Director. The Program Director will contact the complainant within 5 working days of receipt of the grievance to investigate and discuss the issue of the grievance and attempt resolution. The Program Director will then respond in writing to the complainant, within 5 working days of the discussion with the complainant, with a strategy to resolve the grievance.

**Step 4:** If the patient/client is dissatisfied with the response from the Program Director, or if the complaint specifically involves the Program Director, the complainant will direct the Vivent Health Grievance Report Form to the Chief Operating Officer or Chief Pharmacy Officer. The Chief Operating Officer or Chief Pharmacy Officer will investigate and address the issue and contact the

complainant within 10 working days of receiving the grievance. If a mutual satisfactory resolution is not achieved within this grievance process, Vivent Health will consult with the State AIDS/HIV Program for final disposition of the grievance.

# PATIENT GRIEVANCE REPORT FORM

Person Filing Grievance:	Date:
Staff Receiving Grievance:	Date:
Description of Grievance:	
Program Involved:	
Staff/Volunteer Involved:	
Complainant's Signature:	
Actions Taken for Resolution:	
Follow Up Needed:	
Resolution Obtained: ____ YES ____ NO	
Comments:	
Grievance appealed to:	

Note: Use back of this page if more space is needed. Director should attach this form to any applicable written reports and file them permanently in a confidential place



# PATIENT EDUCATION

## Tips on Safe Storage and Disposal of Your Prescription Medicines



Information  
on how to store and  
dispose of your  
medicines.

### Tips on Safe Storage and Disposal of Your Prescription Medicines

National Council on Patient Information and Education



**Where do you keep your medicines?** Are they in different places—with some in the medicine cabinet, some in the kitchen, and some in the bedroom or elsewhere? As a parent, grandparent, or family member, it's important that you organize and keep track of your medicines.

After all, you will want to know where a particular medicine is when you or someone else needs to find it. And you will want to keep your medicines secure so that a child, or a teenager, or even a stranger, does not get into them. That way, you can help prevent an accidental injury, as well as do your part to stop the possible abuse of prescription medicines.

The first step in getting organized is to take a look at all the medicines you have. You should try to do this type of inventory every six months, or at least once a year.

Start by checking the expiration date on the bottle—you don't want to take any chances with a medicine that no longer works the way it's supposed to. Also, look for medicines that are discolored, dried out, crumbling, or show other signs that they are past their prime. Check the expiration date for eye drops and eardrops, too. They may no longer be effective and, worse, could be a breeding ground for bacteria or fungus.

In addition, look for leftover prescription medicines from a previous illness or condition. You will want to discard these since you should never try to treat yourself (or anyone else) with a prescription medicine. Your symptoms might seem similar to what you had before, but the cause could be different or the medicine may not be the right one this time around.



### Proper Disposal of Prescription Medicines

Federal Guidelines encourage consumers to:

- Take unused, unneeded, or expired prescription drugs out of their original containers and throw them in the trash.
- Mixing prescription drugs with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter, and putting them in impermeable, non-descript containers, such as empty cans or sealable bags, will further ensure the drugs are not diverted.
- Flush prescription medications down the toilet only if the label or accompanying patient information specifically instructs doing so.
- Take advantage of community pharmaceutical take-back programs or community solid waste programs. Where these programs exist, they are a good way to dispose of unused pharmaceuticals.

### Find a cool, dry area

Now that you've identified the medicines you want to keep, the next step is to find a safe place to keep them.

You'll want to store your medicine in an area that is convenient, but is also cool and dry – since heat and humidity can damage medicines. That's why a bathroom is not a good place to keep your medicines unless you are able to keep the room well ventilated. (However, the bathroom medicine chest is an ideal place to keep items such as bandages, tweezers, gauze, cotton balls, scissors, and other products that aren't affected by heat or humidity.)

## Lock up your medicines

If there are children around, you might want to find an area where you can lock up your medicines. A cabinet or a drawer with a lock on it would work.

It's also an excellent idea to lock up any controlled substances that have been prescribed for you. These include medicines such as hydromorphone (Dilaudid®), oxycodone (OxyContin® and Percocet®), hydrocodone (Vicodin®), and alprazolam (Xanax®).\*

The theft and abuse of prescription medicines is a serious problem. You play a big role in keeping these powerful medicines out of the hands of those who shouldn't have them. Since it is dangerous, as well as illegal, for anyone but you to use a controlled substance prescribed for you, a locked storage area can help keep a stranger or someone else from gaining access to them.

## Be smart...and safe

Here are some other suggestions that can help you be smarter about storing and using your medicines.

- Keep your medicines separate from those of your spouse or other family members (for instance, on a different shelf or at least on a separate side of a shelf). This will make it less likely that you take the wrong ones by mistake.
- You may find it helpful to have a countertop or tabletop near where you keep your medicine so you can open the bottle with it resting on the flat surface. In case you drop your pill, it will land on the tabletop and not be lost down the drain or on the floor. (But be sure not to leave your medicine bottles out on the counter afterwards.)
- Good lighting near where you store your medicines will help you make sure you are taking the right medicine. Never take medicines in the dark.
- Keep the medicine in the bottle it came in. The amber color protects the medicine from light. You will also have the information right there about what the medicine is and how often to take it. The label will also have the phone number of the pharmacy so you can call when it is time for a refill.
- Never mix different medicines in the same bottle. You might end up taking the wrong one by mistake. It is also possible that some of one medicine could rub off on another and affect how well it works.
- Keep the lids on your pill bottles tightly closed. A cap can't be childproof if it's not fastened correctly.
- If there is cotton in the pill bottle when you first open it, remove the cotton and throw it away. The cotton can absorb moisture and affect the medicine that is inside.

\*Dilaudid is a registered trademark of Abbott Laboratories. OxyContin is a registered trademark of Purdue Pharma, L.P. Percocet is a registered trademark of Endo Pharmaceuticals. Vicodin is a registered trademark of Abbott Laboratories. Xanax is a registered trademark of Pfizer Inc.



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[www.mustforseniors.org](http://www.mustforseniors.org)  
[www.talkaboutrx.org](http://www.talkaboutrx.org)  
[www.bemedwise.org](http://www.bemedwise.org)

This flyer contains general information and is not intended to take the place of any advice given by your healthcare professional(s). They know about your specific medical conditions and medicines.

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# Stop Germs! Stay Healthy! Wash Your Hands

## WHEN?

- Before, during, and after preparing food
- Before eating food
- Before and after caring for someone who is sick
- Before and after treating a cut or wound
- After using the toilet
- After changing diapers or cleaning up a child who has used the toilet
- After blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing
- After touching an animal, animal feed, or animal waste
- After handling pet food or pet treats
- After touching garbage

Keeping hands clean  
is one of the most  
important things we  
can do to stop the  
spread of germs and  
stay healthy.

## HOW?

- **Wet** your hands with clean, running water (warm or cold), turn off the tap, and apply soap.
- **Lather** your hands by rubbing them together with the soap. Be sure to lather the backs of your hands, between your fingers, and under your nails.
- **Scrub** your hands for at least 20 seconds. Need a timer? Hum the "Happy Birthday" song from beginning to end twice.
- **Rinse** hands well under clean, running water.
- **Dry** hands using a clean towel or air dry them.



Information on  
how to prevent infections.

For more details  
on handwashing,  
visit CDC's Handwashing  
Website at  
[www.cdc.gov/handwashing](http://www.cdc.gov/handwashing)



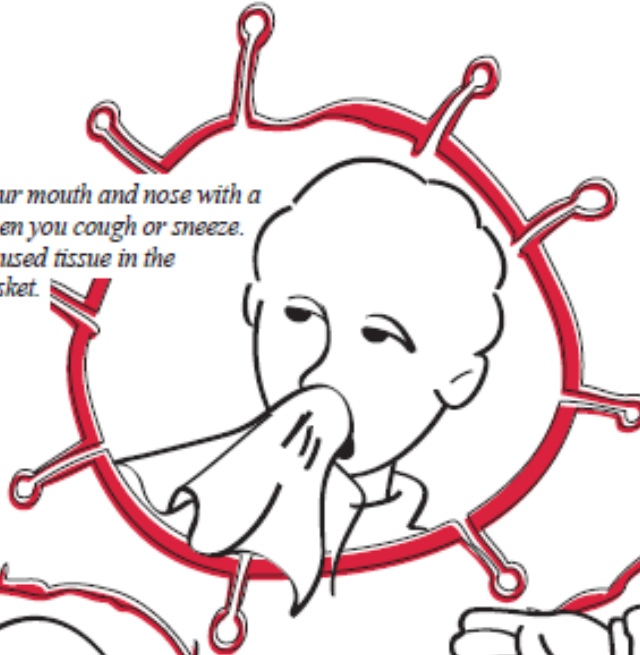
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

CS245253A

# Cover Cough

— Stop the spread of germs that can make you and others sick! —

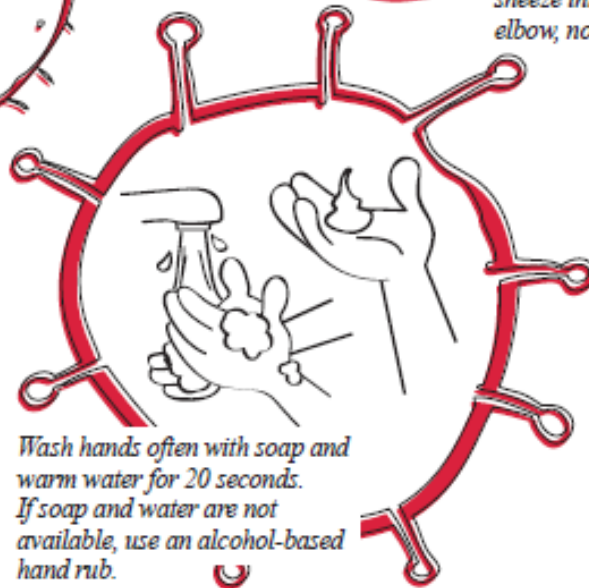
*Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Put your used tissue in the waste basket.*



*If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your upper sleeve or elbow, not your hands.*



*You may be asked to put on a facemask to protect others.*



*Wash hands often with soap and warm water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub.*



CS208322



## Protect Your Health: Important Disaster Preparedness Tips





Information on how to be ready for an emergency. Always take your medicines and our phone number with you in an emergency.


### Overview

Before a state of emergency, it's crucial to create a disaster preparedness plan for your healthcare needs. It may be impossible to predict outcomes during a natural disaster, but the following tips can prevent many life-threatening situations before they occur.


### Preparing for a Natural Disaster

 **Pack all essential medications in a waterproof bag.** A freezer safe, re-sealable bag is great in a pinch.


 **If possible, fill prescriptions ahead of time.** In a state of emergency, prescriptions can be filled up to 30 days without prior doctor approval.

 **Make a prescription medicine plan.** Use Rx on the Run to print a personalized wallet card that includes your prescriptions with the latest dosage and necessary instructions for proper use.


 **Purchase non-perishable food, water, and nutrient-rich items.** Apples, bananas and oranges are a great snack that don't require refrigeration and will last up to a week.

 **Fully charge your electronic devices and pack spare batteries, chargers, and other essential items.** To conserve battery, limit the use of unnecessary apps and switch your phone to low-power mode when fully charged.

 **Be aware of your closest healthcare resources, including pharmacies, hospitals, and urgent care clinics.** Use Google maps to drop a pin on nearby healthcare locations.

 **Have a contingency plan for managing chronic conditions.** For patients with:

- **DIABETES:** Ensure you have insulin and refrain from eating carbohydrates and other sugars.
- **KIDNEY DISEASE:** Make sure you have access to dialysis treatment.
- **CARDIOVASCULAR/PULMONARY DISEASES:** Keep a supply of oxygen with you at all times.
- **DISABILITY:** Develop contingency transportation plans or identify a trusted caretaker if necessary.
- **ELDERLY:** Post emergency numbers near every house and cellular phone.

 **Make sure to have an evacuation plan in case you need to leave your home.** To find a shelter near you, text FEMA the word "shelter" along with your zip code to 4-3-3-6-2.

 **Use Rx Open ([rxopen.org](https://rxopen.org)) to find open pharmacies near you.**

Healthcare Ready is here to help you stay prepared for a natural disaster, infectious disease outbreak or man-made event. Our online resources provide easy tips for what to do next when a disaster strikes and help make life-after as normal as possible. For more information on how your rare or chronic illness can impact your evacuation strategy, visit [www.healthcareready.org](https://www.healthcareready.org), email us at [alerts@healthcareready.org](mailto:alerts@healthcareready.org), and contact us at 1-866-247-2694.

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## Protect Your Health: Stay Safe and Healthy During Natural Disasters

During an emergency, unforeseen circumstances and events can put your health at risk. While it may be impossible to prevent all health complications, it's critical to prioritize your health and minimize adverse effects. Remember that natural disasters can potentially disrupt operations for pharmacies, providers, and hospitals, so it's crucial to prepare in advance to take care of your health.

### Staying Healthy During a Natural Disaster



**Take necessary medications as prescribed.** To help maintain regularly scheduled use of medicines, organize your prescriptions for the week and schedule a reminder on your phone to take them as prescribed.



**Make sure your medications remain stable.** It's important to make sure your medicines do not come into contact with water or become exposed to extreme temperatures. Some medicines must remain within a certain temperature range.



**Use Rx Open to locate nearest open pharmacy if you run out of medicines or need a refill. If you have a chronic disease, disability, or are a senior and need emergency assistance, refer to the emergency resources below:**

- Healthcare Ready: 1-866-247-2694
- FEMA: 1-800-621-3362
- American Diabetes Association: 1-800-342-2283
- American Heart Association: 1-800-242-8721
- American Association of People with Disabilities: 1-800-840-8844
- American Stoke Association: 1-888-478-7653
- American Red Cross: 1-800-733-2767



**Drink plenty of bottled water and avoid skipping meals.** Eat nutrient-rich, non-refrigerated foods such as fruits and vegetables.



**Beware of floodwater contaminants:**

- Do not drink floodwater; drink bottled water instead. If you don't have bottled water, boil (for at least 1 minute) or disinfect water to make it safe.
- Do not cook, clean or brush teeth with floodwater.
- Cover open wounds and limit exposure to floodwater at all times.



**Do not eat foods that have expired, perished or come in contact with flood water.** Perishable foods in the refrigerator will be unsafe to eat after 4 hours without power. Use dry or block ice to keep your refrigerator cold for longer or use an extra cooler.



**Recognize symptoms of food or waterborne illness.** If you experience vomiting, diarrhea, and abdominal pain, contact a healthcare provider immediately.

Healthcare Ready is here to help you stay prepared for a natural disaster, infectious disease outbreak or man-made event. Our online resources provide easy tips for what to do next when a disaster strikes and help make life-after as normal as possible. For more information on how your rare or chronic illness can be impacted by a disaster visit [www.healthcareready.org](http://www.healthcareready.org), email us at [alerts@healthcareready.org](mailto:alerts@healthcareready.org), and contact us at 1-866-247-2694.










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## Protect Your Health: Beware of Post-Disaster Health Risks

Even after the immediate threats of a disaster have passed, the remaining destruction and wreckage pose significant health risks. Mold, spoiled food, and damaged structures and buildings are particularly dangerous, and the already-strained healthcare infrastructure may be slower to respond to accidents or illnesses. It's critical to stay vigilant, careful, and not take the relative calm for granted.

### Returning Home After a Disaster

-  **Use caution when cleaning debris or fixing broken items.** Always wear gloves, masks, and protective eyewear, and beware of glass, nails, and other sharp objects. If you are cut or scraped, clean and disinfect the wound thoroughly and keep it covered.
-  **Don't overexert yourself.** Remember to take frequent breaks while cleaning and repairing your home and other items.
-  **Dispose of foods that may have spoiled or been exposed to floodwater.** Without power, perishable foods only last for 4 hours in the refrigerator and 24-48 hours in the freezer.
-  **Dispose of medicines and other medical supplies that may have been exposed to floodwaters.** It's important that medicines and medical supplies stay within a certain temperature range and remain completely dry. Dispose of any items you think may have been damaged in any way.
-  **Disinfect cooking and eating surfaces.** Use boiling water or a solution of one-tablespoon bleach to one-gallon clean water to clean pots, pans, countertops, dishes and silverware.
-  **Check for mold inside your home, especially if you have asthma or another respiratory condition.** Mold can cause irritation and inflammation of existing respiratory conditions.
-  **Check for gas leaks, and do not run gas-powered generators, grills or heaters indoors.** Gas fumes contain carbon monoxide, which may build up and be lethal.
-  **Beware of fire ants, mosquitos and other insects.** Poisonous and disease-carrying insects are more common during flooding.
-  **Contact family members and friends.** Stay in contact and let them know you are safe.

Healthcare Ready is here to help you stay prepared for a natural disaster, infectious disease outbreak or man-made event. Our online resources provide easy tips for what to do when a disaster strikes and help make life-after as normal as possible. For more information on how the management of your rare or chronic illness can be impacted during a disaster, and what steps you can take, visit [www.healthcare-ready.org](http://www.healthcare-ready.org), email us at [alerts@healthcareready.org](mailto:alerts@healthcareready.org), and contact us at 1-866-247-2694.

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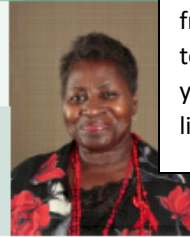
## Take Your HIV Medicine Correctly

8

### Tips to Help You

*Shirley, living with HIV since 1987*

*Staying adherent to your HIV medication can be difficult. That's why it's important to get off to a good start when you begin your treatment. Missing even one dose a month can make treatment less effective. Proper planning is important for success.*



Information from the CDC on how to take care of yourself if you are living with HIV.

1

#### Take Your Medications at the Same Time Every Day.

Make it part of your routine. For example, if your medical provider prescribes taking your medicine every morning with food, make it a habit to take it at breakfast.

2

#### Keep All Your Medical Appointments.

It is important to take care of your health. Form a good relationship with your doctor. Appointments give you the chance to talk openly to your provider about any adherence challenges or treatment concerns. You and your provider have the same goal— **TO KEEP YOU HEALTHY.**

3

#### Use A Pill Box to Organize Your Medicine.

A pill box will help you keep track of exactly which doses you have taken. You can buy pill boxes set up for 7 days, 14 days, or 28 days.

4

#### Keep A Daily Log.

Record each time you take your medicine. Note any side effects or reasons for missed doses to problem-solve with your provider.

5

#### Download An App to Your Phone.

There are apps for smartphones that are designed to support you taking your medicine exactly as prescribed. Use an app to set dose reminders and keep track of your medicine.

6

#### Plan Ahead For Changes in Your Daily Routine.

Carry an extra dose of your medicine, so you will have it when you work late, travel, or spend the night away from home.

7

#### Set Up Automatic Refills at Your Pharmacy.

Your medicine will be ready when you need it, and you won't run out.

8

#### Ask Others for Help.

Join a peer support group to connect with people taking HIV medicine and learn from their experiences. Ask family members and friends to encourage and remind you to take your medicine.

*Talk to your provider about the importance of taking your HIV medication every day.*

For more information go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/living/index.html>

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Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention



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## A Support Partner Can Help You

5

### Ways

*Uriah, living with HIV since 1997, and his partner*

*Taking your HIV medicine every day can be hard. You don't have to do it alone. Getting support from a trusted friend, family member, spouse or partner makes it easier to take every dose, every day. You can also find support from a peer or case manager at your local AIDS Service Organization. Here are some ways a "support partner" can help you stay on track.*



1

#### Provide a Caring and Listening Ear.

It helps to have someone who can listen to you without judging and who can encourage you when you need it.

2

#### Help You Get Organized.

Sometimes people miss doses because they have busy schedules or run out of their medicine. Your support partner can help you fill up your pill box, remind you about refills, or manage paperwork for your treatment and support services.

3

#### Remind You to Take Your Medicine.

You can ask your support partner to give you a daily phone call or send you a text or email to remind you to take your medicine.

4

#### Identify Challenges and Solutions.

Your support partner can help you think of reasons why you missed a dose. If you keep a pill schedule, your support partner can review it with you and discuss things that may get in the way of taking your medicine. Together you can come up with ideas so you don't miss a dose.

5

#### Attend Medical Appointments With You.

Your support partner can help you make notes about side effects or challenges you are having. Together, you can discuss them with your medical provider.

*Talk to your provider about the importance of taking your HIV medication every day.*

For more information go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/living/index.html>

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Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention



## About Your Viral Load and CD4 Cell Count

5

### Facts To Know

Alfredo, living with HIV since 1993

The amount of HIV in your blood is called "viral load." Viral load shows how fast HIV is reproducing in your body – the lower your viral load, the better. Your "CD4 cell count" measures the health of your immune system. The higher it is, the better your body can fight infections.



1

#### Taking Every Dose, Every Day is The Key To a Low Viral Load and High CD4 Cell Count.

When HIV medicine keeps the virus under control, your body can make more CD4 cells. Healthy adults usually have 500 to 1800 CD4 cell counts.

2

#### CD4 Cells Defend Your Body Against Infections and Other Illnesses

Without HIV medicine, too many CD4 cells are destroyed by the virus. The lower your CD4 cell count is, the harder it is for you to stay healthy.

3

#### An Undetectable Viral Load is the Result You Want From Taking Your Hiv Medication.

Having an undetectable viral load means the amount of virus is so low that it cannot be measured by the blood test. This shows that your medicine is working and has the virus under control.

4

#### An Undetectable Viral Load Doesn't Mean That You No Longer Have HIV.

Your body can never completely get rid of HIV. It is still there even when lab tests cannot detect it, which means you can still pass HIV to others. For this reason, it is important to take your medicine even when you have an undetectable viral load.

5

#### HIV Medicine Makes It Harder for the Virus to Make Copies of Itself.

Taking your medicine at the correct time every day keeps the right amount in your body. When you skip doses, the virus can multiply and change so that your medicine no longer works.

*Talk to your provider about the importance of taking your HIV medication every day.*

For more information go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/living/index.html>

National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention  
Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention



# Why HIV Medication Saves Lives

5

## Reasons

*Judith, living with HIV since 1997*

*Adherence means taking your HIV medicine exactly as your doctor prescribes – every dose, every day. Adherence is important to the success of your HIV treatment.*



1

### It Helps You Live Longer.

People who start treatment earlier, when they have higher CD4 cell counts, may live as long as people without HIV infection. Without treatment, HIV leads to AIDS (acquired immunodeficiency syndrome) and may lead to early death.

2

### It Helps Your Medicine Work.

HIV treatment does not make HIV go away, but taking your medicine as directed slows down the virus by making it hard for the virus to make copies of itself.

3

### It Keeps You Healthy.

Taking every dose, every day, keeps the virus from destroying too many CD4 cells, which play an important role in how your body fights off infections and other illnesses. That means you stay healthy!

4

### It Helps Prevent Drug Resistance to HIV Medicine.

Missing doses and not taking your medicine correctly makes it easier for HIV in your body to change and cause your medicines to stop working. This is called drug resistance. Taking every dose on time every day helps to prevent drug resistance.

5

### It Can Help Protect Your Partners.

Taking your medicine exactly as your doctor prescribes helps protect your sexual partners from becoming infected. When you take your HIV medication every day, you have a much lower chance of passing the virus to your sexual partners. But remember, you can still pass HIV to others, so you should take steps to prevent transmission by using condoms every time you have sex.

*Talk to your provider about the importance of taking your HIV medication every day.*

For more information go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/living/index.html>

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Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention



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## Why People Miss Their Doses

5

### Reasons

*Andrew, living with HIV since 1995*

*It's normal to run into challenges with taking your HIV medicine. But, even missing one dose a month can make your medicine less effective. The good news is that there are ways to help you take every dose, every day. What's your challenge?*



1

#### **I Forget.**

Pick something you do at the same time every day, like watching your favorite TV show or brushing your teeth, and take your medicine at that time every day. Set an alarm on your watch or phone. Download a smartphone app to set up reminders and track doses.

2

#### **I Feel Sick From the Side Effects.**

It's tempting to skip a dose when your medicine makes you feel bad. But, don't stop taking your medicine. Call your medical provider if you develop any side effects. Most side effects go away within a few weeks. Your provider can recommend ways to manage your side effects.

3

#### **My Treatment Plan is Too Complicated.**

Fill a pill organizer at the start of the week with each dose of your medicine. Keep it where you can see it. Ask your medical provider to help you understand what medicine to take, when to take them, and how (for example, with or without food).

4

#### **I Feel Overwhelmed Doing This Alone.**

It's okay to ask for help. Your healthcare team is there to support you. Talk with them about the challenges you face so they can work with you to find solutions. Join a support group or reach out to family or friends you trust. Ask for help with tasks, like calling you for regular check-ins, going to the pharmacy to pick up your medicine, or just listening.

5

#### **I Can't Afford to Pay for My Medicine.**

There are public and private drug assistance programs that can help pay for your HIV medicine. Ask your HIV case manager or counselor to explain these programs and help you apply for assistance.

*Talk to your provider about the importance of taking your HIV medication every day.*

For more information go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/living/index.html>

National Center for HIV/AIDS, Viral Hepatitis, STD, and TB Prevention  
Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention



CS241860-3





## PrEP Information Sheet

### Pre-exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP) for HIV Prevention

#### Frequently Asked Questions

##### What is PrEP?

"PrEP" stands for preexposure prophylaxis. The word "prophylaxis" (pronounced pro fil ak sis) means to prevent or control the spread of an infection or disease. The goal of PrEP is to prevent HIV infection from taking hold if you are exposed to the virus. This is done by taking a pill that contains 2 HIV medications every day. These are the same medicines used to stop the virus from growing in people who are already infected.

##### Why take PrEP?

The HIV epidemic in the United States is growing. About 50,000 people get infected with HIV each year. More of these infections are happening in some groups of people and some areas of the country than in others.

##### Is PrEP a vaccine?

No. PrEP medication does not work the same way as a vaccine. When you take a vaccine, it trains the body's immune system to fight off infection for years. You will need to take a pill every day by mouth for PrEP medications to protect you from infection. PrEP does not work after you stop taking it. The medication that was shown to be safe and to help block HIV infection is called "Truvada" (pronounced tru va duh). Truvada is a combination of 2 drugs (tenofovir and emtricitabine). These medicines work by blocking important pathways that the HIV virus uses to set up an infection. If you take Truvada as PrEP daily, the presence of the medication in your bloodstream can often stop the HIV virus from establishing itself and spreading in your body. If you do not take the Truvada pills every day, there may not be enough medicine in your blood stream to block the virus.

##### Should I consider taking PrEP?

PrEP is not for everyone. Doctors prescribe PrEP for some patients who have a very high risk of coming in contact with HIV by not using a condom when they have sex with a person who has HIV infection. You should consider PrEP if you are a man or woman who sometimes has sex without using a condom, especially if you have a sex partner who you know has HIV infection. You should also consider PrEP if you don't know whether your partner has HIV infection but you know that your partner is at risk (for example, your partner inject drugs or is having sex with other people in addition to you) or if you have recently been told by a health care provider that you had a sexually transmitted infection. If your partner has HIV infection, PrEP may be an option to help protect you from getting HIV infection while you try to get pregnant, during pregnancy, or while breastfeeding.

##### How well does PrEP work?

PrEP was tested in several large studies with men who have sex with men, men who have sex with women, and women who have sex with men. All people in these studies (1) were tested at the beginning of the trial to be sure that they did not have HIV infection, (2) agreed to take an oral PrEP tablet daily, (3) received intensive counseling on safer-sex behavior, (4) were tested regularly for sexually transmitted infections, and (5) were given a regular supply of condoms.

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Division of HIV/AIDS Prevention



CS246841-A

Several studies showed that PrEP reduced the risk of getting HIV infection.

- Men who have sex with men who were given PrEP medication to take, were 44% less likely to get HIV infection than were those men who took a pill without any PrEP medicine in it (a placebo). Forty-four percent was an average that included men who didn't take the medicine every day and those who did. Among the men who said they took most of their daily doses, PrEP reduced the risk of HIV infection by 73% or more, up to 92% for some.
- Among men and women in couples in which one partner had HIV infection and the other partner initially did not ("HIV-discordant" couples), those who received PrEP medication were 75% less likely to become infected than those who took a pill without any medicine in it (a placebo). Among those who said they took most of their daily doses, PrEP reduced the risk of HIV infection by up to 90%.
- In one study of men and women who entered the study as individuals (not as a couple), PrEP worked for both men and women in one study: those who received the medication were 62% less likely to get HIV infection; those who said they took most of their daily doses, were 85% less likely to get HIV infection. But in another study, only about 1 in 4 women (<26%) had PrEP medication found in their blood when it was checked. This indicated that few women were actually taking their medication and that study found no protection against HIV infection.

More information on the details of these studies can be found at [www.cdc.gov/hiv/prep](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/prep).

### Is PrEP safe?

The clinical trials also provided safety information on PrEP. Some people in the trials had early side effects such as an upset stomach or loss of appetite but these were mild and usually went away within the first month. Some people also had a mild headache. No serious side effects were observed. You should tell your doctor if these or other symptoms become severe or do not go away.

### How can I start PrEP?

If you think you may be at high risk for HIV, talk to your doctor about PrEP. If you and your doctor agree that PrEP might reduce your risk of getting HIV infection, you will need to come in for a general health physical, blood tests for HIV, and tests for other infections that you can get from sex partners. Your blood will also be tested to see if your kidneys and liver are functioning well. If these tests show that PrEP medicines are likely to be safe for you to take and that you might benefit from PrEP, your doctor may give you a prescription after discussing it with you.

Taking PrEP medicines will require you to follow-up regularly with your doctor. You will receive counseling on sexual behaviors and blood tests for HIV infection and to see if your body is reacting well to Truvada. You should take your medicine every day as prescribed, and your doctor will advise you about ways to help you take it regularly so that it stands the best chance to help you avoid HIV infection. Tell your doctor if you are having trouble remembering to take your medicine or if you want to stop PrEP.

### If I take PrEP can I stop using condoms when I have sex?

You should not stop using condoms because you are taking PrEP. If PrEP is taken daily, it offers a lot of protection against HIV infection, but not 100%. Condoms also offer a lot of protection against HIV infection if they are used correctly every time you have sex, but not 100%. PrEP medications don't give you any protection from other infections you can get during sex, but condoms do. So you will get the most protection from HIV and other sexual infections if you consistently take PrEP medication and consistently use condoms during sex.

### How long do I need to take PrEP?

You should discuss this with your doctor. There are several reasons that people stop taking PrEP. If your risk of getting HIV infections becomes low because of changes that occur in your life, you may want to stop taking PrEP. If you find you don't want to take a pill every day or often forget to take your pills, other ways of protecting yourself from HIV infection may work better for you. If you have side effects from the medication that are interfering with your life or if blood tests show that your body is reacting to PrEP in unsafe ways, your doctor may stop prescribing PrEP for you.