







# nPEP Myths and Facts

(Non-occupational Post-Exposure Prophylaxis)

When started within 3 days of a potential exposure, nPEP is a safe and proven standard for prevention of HIV infection. See the AETC NCRC nPEP Prescribers Guide for assessment and treatment details.



MYTH	FACT	
<i>There's no rush</i>	<b>Sooner is better</b>	 <p>To be most effective, nPEP should be started as soon as possible after the exposure, but generally not later than 72 hours after the exposure. Ideally, the first dose should be taken within 1-2 hours after the exposure.</p>
<i>It requires special training</i>	<b>Any prescriber can manage nPEP</b>	 <p>Medical providers (MD, DO, NP, PA, PharmD) with prescribing authority can initiate nPEP and provide follow-up care.</p>
<i>The medications are toxic</i>	<b>Today's medications are well tolerated</b>	 <p>ARV medications currently used for nPEP are well tolerated, have milder side effects than former regimens, and are highly effective if used as recommended. In general, the benefit of nPEP far outweighs the risk of possible medication related side effects.</p>
<i>It's expensive</i>	<b>There are assistance programs for most patients</b>	 <p>Although nPEP medications are expensive, they can be obtained at no cost for MOST patients regardless of insurance status. These programs are easy to access, and eligible individuals are often approved immediately.</p>
<i>It's an urban issue</i>	<b>It's an issue everywhere</b>	 <p>The decision to use nPEP should be based on the acquisition risk and NOT on the HIV prevalence in a specific region.</p>
<i>It encourages risky behavior</i>	<b>There are HIV prevention options for people with ongoing risk</b>	 <p>If someone uses nPEP multiple times, and/or is at ongoing risk for acquiring HIV, discuss starting pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) after completion of nPEP.</p>

## National Clinician Consultation Center nPEP Warmline

844-ASK-NCCC or 844-275-6222

Hours of operation for free nPEP clinician-to-clinician consultation:  
8:00 AM - 4:00 PM PT, Mon-Fri (except holidays)

<https://aidsetc.org/npep> August 2025

