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## PEP Now Available to Protect Against HIV Infection



**Contact:**

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**Pensacola, Fla.** – On October 12, 2020, the Florida Department of Health in Escambia County (FDOH-Escambia) PrEP Connect will begin providing non-occupational post-exposure prophylaxis (PEP) service to those who may have been exposed to HIV. PEP is a preventive treatment strategy that may reduce, but not eliminate, the possibility of becoming infected with HIV. To discuss your situation with a PEP Navigator call (850) 595-6345 during regular business hours.

PEP should be used only in emergency situations and must be started within 72 hours after the possible exposure, before HIV has time to rapidly replicate in the body. PEP is most effective (up to 99%) if taken within 2-3 hours after exposure. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention strongly encourages the administration of antiretroviral PEP in the event of high-risk, non-occupational exposures such as unprotected vaginal or anal sex with a partner of known or unknown HIV status, sharing injection drug use equipment or sexual assault.

PEP consists of 3 antiretroviral medications taken for 28 days. While on PEP, it is recommended that you should continue to use condoms with sex partners and engage in safe needle injection practices. These strategies can protect you from being exposed to HIV again and reduce the chances of transmitting HIV to others, if you do become infected while you're on PEP.

If you are in need of PEP services, please call the PEP Navigator for [FDOH-Escambia PrEP Connect](#) at (850) 595-6345.

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The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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