PrEP Is Safe for People With Hepatitis B

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People with hepatitis B virus (HBV) can safely take Truvada (tenofovir/emtricitabine) as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP), as it does not lead to liver inflammation “flares” or other health problems when it is used or discontinued, HIVandHepatitis.com reports. Researchers analyzed a small, HBV-positive subgroup of the iPrEx study, which first proved PrEP’s efficacy among men who have sex with men (MSM) in 2010. Results were presented their findings at the 8th International AIDS Society Conference on HIV Pathogenesis, Treatment and Prevention in Vancouver, British Columbia.

The two medications in Truvada are also active against hep B.

The iPrEx study included about 2,500 MSM and a few transgender women. Thirteen of these participants had chronic hep B, about half of whom were, by chance, assigned to take Truvada, while the other half took a placebo.

The six HBV-positive participants on PrEP did not experience flares of the virus during times when they were not taking Truvada (on average, adherence to the daily regimen was poor in iPrEx) or after stopping the drug. Those who had isolated anti-HBc+ (a positive isolated hep B core antibody test) had no detectable hep B viral load and also did not experience flares of the virus when taking Truvada or after stopping. Those with HBsAg+ (a positive hep B surface antigen test) did experience rebound of the virus, but did not experience clinical relapses while using Truvada or after discontinuing the drug.

To read the HIVandHepatitis article, click here.

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