“Do It For Future You” Urges Folks to Prioritize HIV Healthcare Today

ViiV Healthcare’s new HIV campaign sends a clear message: The choices you make today shape your tomorrow.

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The choices you make today shape your tomorrow, especially when it comes to sexual health and HIV prevention. That’s the overriding message of the “Do It For Future You” campaign launched by ViiV Healthcare, an HIV-focused global pharmaceutical company.

The multichannel campaign, which includes several videos, empowers people to ask their doctor about long-acting injectable options for HIV treatment and for pre-exposure prophylaxis, or PrEP, for HIV prevention.

“Our goal with ‘Do It For Future You’ is to help people see that the health decisions they make now shape the life they are building, regardless of their HIV status,” said Bithiah Lafontant, head of enterprise communications at ViiV Healthcare, in a press release. “We believe long-acting injectables are key to building healthy futures because having different treatment and prevention options can help ensure that no one is left behind. For individuals who may find a daily routine challenging, or where persistent stigma creates a barrier to care, long-acting options offer another way to stay consistent, making a thriving, healthy future feel truly within reach.”

About 1.2 million people are living with HIV in the United States, and about 13% of them don’t know they are positive. What’s more, nearly 40% of new HIV cases are transmitted by people who don’t know they are HIV positive.

People with HIV who achieve and maintain viral suppression experience slower disease progression, enjoy better overall health and are less likely to develop opportunistic illnesses. What’s more, people with an undetectable viral load don’t transmit HIV to others through sex. This is known as treatment as prevention, or Undetectable Equals Untransmittable (U=U).

To date, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved four forms of PrEP: Truvada and Descovy are daily pills; Apretude is a shot given every two months; and Yeztugo is a twice-yearly injectable that is highly effective in women, gay men and gender-diverse populations. Due to insufficient evidence, Descovy is not yet indicated as PrEP for cisgender women and trans men. Generic (and much cheaper) versions of Truvada are available. To learn more about PrEP, see the POZ Basics on HIV Prevention: Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis (PrEP).

HIV treatment options also include long-acting injectables. Cabenuva, approved by the FDA in 2021 and given as monthly injections, was the first complete long-acting injectable treatment regimen to hit the market. Other long-acting HIV treatments are in the pipeline, with drugs from ViiV and Gilead Sciences and Merck currently in clinical trials.

Long-acting injectables can help close gaps in HIV care by improving adherence to medication, whether an individual is newly diagnosed or living long term with the virus. Adherence leads to continued viral suppression and protection from HIV. Only about 25% of people who could benefit from PrEP are currently taking it, and nearly a third of people living with HIV have yet to achieve viral suppression, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

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“ViiV Healthcare believes that having a choice in your medicine is essential,” Lafontant added. ViiV manufactures the long-acting injectables Apretude for PrEP and Cabenuva for treatment. “By expanding the options available, people can manage their health in a way that actually fits their lives. Whether it’s starting PrEP, beginning treatment or reconnecting to care, every one of those decisions is a powerful act of self-care and a confident step toward a promising future.”

Learning about HIV treatment and prevention options at ForFutureU.com.

“We want people to understand the simple message of this campaign: Your future belongs to you, not HIV,” said Lafontant.

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