Prevention: Apretude Approved

The Food and Drug Administration approved Apretude as the first long-acting injectable option for pre-exposure prophylaxis.

February 14, 2022 By Liz Highleyman

On December 20, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration approved Apretude (extended-release cabotegravir) as the first long-acting injectable option for pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP). Apretude, from ViiV Healthcare, is administered by a health care worker every other month. Two studies showed that Apretude works even better than the Truvada (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate/emtricitabine) PrEP pill. While daily Truvada is highly effective, some people find adherence is easier with the injections. One study found that long-acting cabotegravir was 69% more effective than daily Truvada at preventing HIV acquisition among men and transgender women who have sex with men. The other study showed that cisgender women who received the injections had about a 90% lower risk of acquiring HIV. In both trials, Apretude was safe and well tolerated; the most common side effect is mild injection site reactions. Only around 25% of the 1.2 million Americans who could benefit from PrEP have used it, and an additional option could help boost that percentage.

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