You Don’t Have to Visit a Doctor to Get PrEP, Thanks to Nurx

Known for its birth-control delivery service, the startup also offers the HIV prevention pill.

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Stigma. Embarrassment. Ignorant health care providers. A lack of insurance coverage. There are many reasons some folks can’t access the HIV prevention pill Truvada as PrEP (pre-exposure prophylaxis). The California-based startup Nurx is offering a solution: Bypass the doctors altogether and have the meds delivered to your home.

Launched in 2015 as a birth-control delivery service, Nurx added PrEP to its drug delivery offers. Last month, Business Insider reports, the company raised $36 million thanks to venture capital firms in Silicon Valley—and Chelsea Clinton joined its board of advisers.

But wait. Don’t people need a prescription for PrEP, and don’t they have to have blood work and lab tests done before getting the script? Yes. And Nurx includes those services.

Here’s how it works. Potential PrEP-takers visit Nurx.com/prep and complete an assessment to determine whether the HIV prevention pill is right for them. If so, Nurx mails them a testing kit that requires small samples of blood and urine (people taking PrEP must be HIV negative and have healthy kidneys).

Once the samples are sent back and tested, a licensed medical provider will write a prescription and Nurx will begin delivering PrEP to the client.

How much does PrEP cost? Here’s what the Nurx website says:

> PrEP is expensive, but it doesn’t necessarily mean you should have to pay for all of it. Often PrEP is covered by insurance, Medicaid, and Medicare. Payment assistance programs are available to help with co-pays or high deductibles. Depending on your insurance coverage, we recommend that you take some time to apply to any payment assistance program(s) you qualify for. Unfortunately, these programs do not cover the cost of lab work and Nurx cannot cover the cost of labs for you. You’ll be responsible for the full cost of the labs to get started on PrEP. The cost varies based on many factors, including insurance coverage, so always check on the cost at the lab before you complete any tests.

Nurx offers PrEP in 19 states and Washington, DC, reports Business Insider, adding that although the company only provides birth control and PrEP, it hopes to offer other meds in the future.

For related information, read the POZ Basics on HIV Prevention. For more about PrEP and PEP (post-exposure prophylaxis), click here.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/visit-doctor-get-prep-thanks-nurx