



## San Francisco Department of Public Health

Grant Colfax, MD  
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### **Big news: Truvada® is going generic on September 30, 2020**

#### **Update for San Francisco PrEP Users**

**Report prepared by San Francisco City Clinic on September 30, 2020**

#### **Bottom line:**

Depending on your insurance situation, you may be charged for your PrEP medication when you go to the pharmacy. Upon your next visit to the pharmacy to pick up your PrEP, **if you face ANY challenges, or if you are charged more than you've been charged in the past, please contact your PrEP provider immediately!** We are here to ensure you continue to have access to affordable PrEP!

#### **So, what's the story with generic PrEP?**

Gilead Sciences, Inc. held the U.S. patent for the medication *emtricitabine 200mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg* (marketed under the brand name Truvada®) until now. This made it so that other drug manufacturers already selling their generic versions in other countries could not do so in the U.S. until Gilead's patent expired on September 30, 2020. *Emtricitabine 200mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg* (FTC 200/TDF 300 for short) is the most commonly used PrEP medication in the U.S.

Now that the patent has expired, Teva Pharmaceutical Industries Ltd., has the exclusive rights to market generic FTC 200/TDF 300 for the 6 months following September 30, 2020, after which it is expected that other producers will join the market and drive down prices considerably.

- **The generic medication FTC 200/TDF 300 will protect you from HIV just as effectively as the brand-name version always has.** All FDA-approved generic medicines work in the same way and provide the same clinical benefit as their brand-name versions. A generic medicine is the same as a brand-name medicine in dosage, safety, effectiveness, strength, stability, and quality, as well as in the way it is taken and should be used.
- The generic brand name will be different from Truvada®, but you will always be able to tell it is the correct medication by its chemical name *emtricitabine 200mg/tenofovir disoproxil fumarate 300mg*.
- The generic medication may also have different color, packaging, flavorings, and inactive ingredients.

#### **What does this mean for my cost for the medication?**

- If you are uninsured or have Medi-Cal, your costs for PrEP will not change at this time.
- If you have private insurance or Medicare, your costs for PrEP at the pharmacy may change starting September 30, 2020. Depending on your plan, the cost may become lower or higher than it has



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been previously. **Upon filling your next bottle at the pharmacy, if you face ANY challenges, or if you are charged more than you've been charged in the past, please contact your PrEP provider immediately!**

- For private insurance plans only (not Medicare): the generic manufacturer does not have a co-pay assistance program. Therefore, if the pharmacy tries to give you the generic medication and you owe a co-pay for it, you can request to fill brand-name Truvada (may require an "override") and use the Gilead Co-Pay Card ([gileadcopay.com](http://gileadcopay.com)) to cover the cost. But your plan may deny this and require you to use the generic medication at any time.
- The vast majority of insurance plans operating in California are required by state regulations to start covering PrEP medication and all medical services necessary for PrEP initiation and follow-up care without cost sharing, no later than January 1, 2021. This means that by that date, it is likely you will start to pay \$0 for PrEP. But it is possible that this will not take effect for your health plan until January 1, 2021.
- Due to the changes in how the medications are priced now that there is a generic option, it is possible that your medication coverage may route you to using either the brand-name or the generic medication, and you may not have a choice of which one. Or, you may have a choice, but the generic will be cheaper, and the brand-name will cost more. This is common when medications become available as a generic. **Again: upon filling your next bottle at the pharmacy, if you face ANY challenges, or if you are charged more than you've been charged in the past, please contact your PrEP provider immediately!**

### Where can I learn more?

If you or your provider have any questions, please contact San Francisco City Clinic at [sfccpatientservices.dph@sfdph.org](mailto:sfccpatientservices.dph@sfdph.org).

For more information on generic medications, the FDA maintains information at its [Generic Drug Facts](#) page.

Sources: HIV Alliance, GoodRx.com, FDA.gov