

# PRE-EXPOSURE PROPHYLAXIS (PrEP) FOR HIV: EFFECTIVENESS, SAFETY, AND INCIDENCE OF STIs IN A TERTIARY HOSPITAL

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## Background and Importance

Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is a proven biomedical strategy to prevent HIV infection in high-risk populations. It is considered a key public health intervention, especially when combined with routine sexually transmitted infection (STI) screening and risk-reduction counseling. Standardized protocols are essential to ensure consistent care, monitor safety, and promote adherence.

## Aim and Objectives

This study aimed to evaluate the effectiveness, tolerability, and adherence to PrEP in a tertiary hospital. Additionally, it sought to assess the incidence and recurrence of STIs during the follow-up period.

## Material and Methods

A retrospective descriptive study from November 2021 to July 2025, involving 71 patients enrolled in the PrEP program.

**Data collected**

- Demographic characteristics, clinical records, pharmacy dispensation, and laboratory findings.
- Adherence was assessed indirectly using pharmacy refill records, pill counts and SMAQ questionnaire.
- Safety was evaluated through side effect reports and biochemical alterations (renal function).
- Routine STI screenings were performed throughout follow-up.

## Results

71 patients

98.6% were male with a median age of 38 ± 10 years

Median duration of PrEP use was two years

**No cases of HIV seroconversion were observed**

Mean treatment adherence was 98%

A total of **145 STIs** were recorded during follow-up

**Side effects:** 43.7% of patients

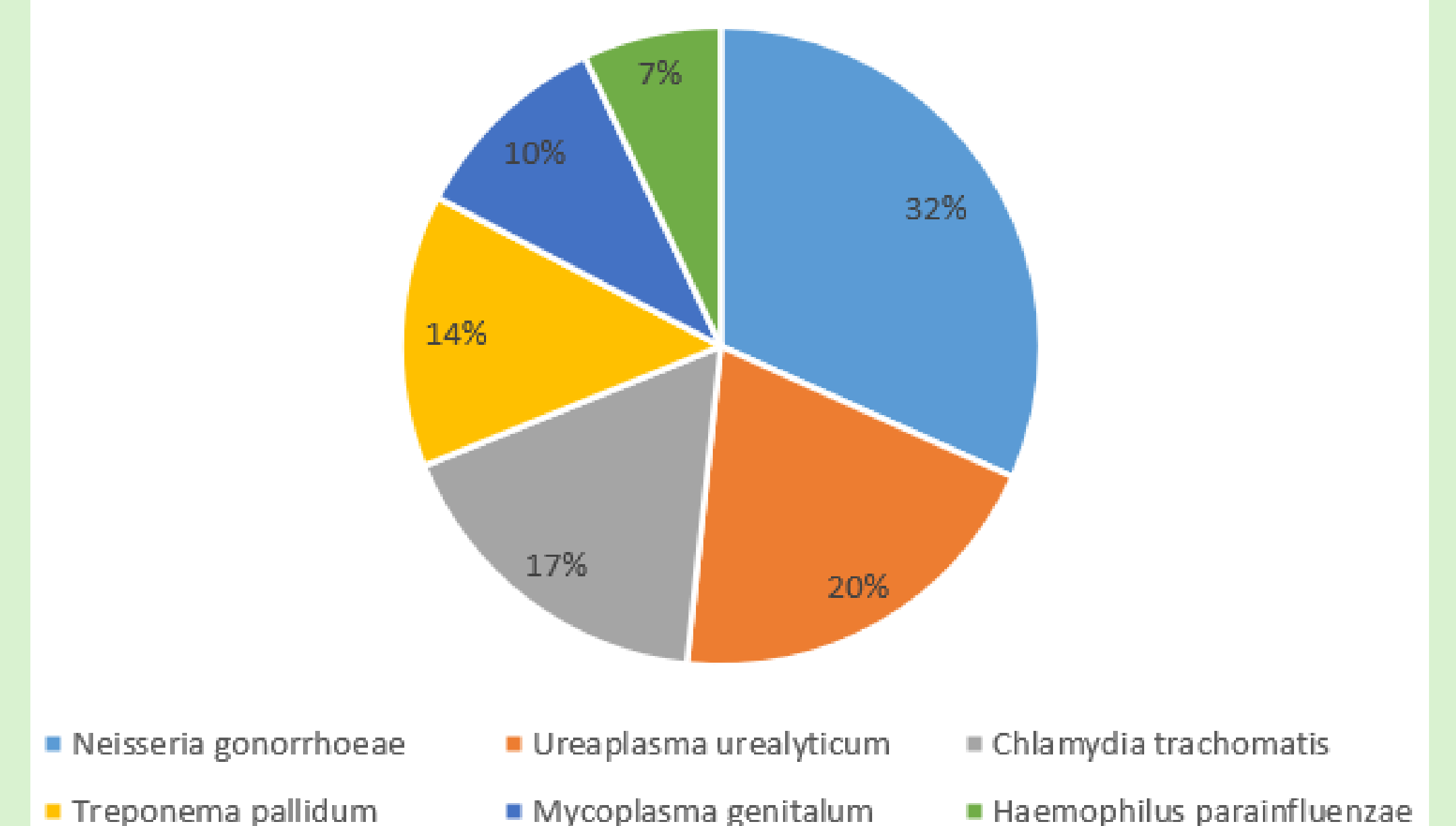
Predominantly mild, transient gastrointestinal symptoms occurring early in treatment

**Biochemical abnormalities:** 21.1% of patients

Mainly decreased glomerular filtration rate or proteinuria

**No discontinuation of treatment was required**

Incidence of STIs in patients on PrEP



## Conclusion and Relevance

PrEP was highly effective and well tolerated. The high incidence of STIs highlights the need for ongoing screening and behavioral counseling. While the hospital protocol demonstrated safety and efficacy, enhanced follow-up and strengthened STI prevention measures are necessary to optimize long-term outcomes.

