

## “HIV Prevention With PrEP” Transcript

Excerpt from [January 8, 2016](#) episode of *Science Friday*.

<b>IRA FLATOW</b>	Let’s move on to a study in the Netherlands that looked at the HIV prevention treatment, PrEP.
<b>AZEEN GHORAYSH</b>	Yeah.
<b>IRA FLATOW</b>	And I don’t think a lot of people have heard about that.
<b>AZEEN GHORAYSH</b>	<p>Yeah. So it’s actually a huge deal. It’s a recently developed, once-a-day pill that, when taken properly, can prevent the transmission of HIV. So it’s basically pre-exposure prophylaxis, is what it’s actually called. It’s basically two meds that are used to treat HIV, so that if someone is exposed to virus, it basically can’t take hold in their bodies. And public health officials have been recommending it more and more to people to take it as a preventive measure in the U.S., but it hasn’t really entered the mainstream in Europe. It hasn’t passed the regulatory bodies, it isn’t publicly available, so you have to arrange with your doctors.</p> <p>So this study was done using data from 617 HIV-positive men in the Netherlands, where they keep and anonymized all the health data of all their citizens, and then give it to scientists to research. So this is all of the people who have been diagnosed as HIV-positive, from 1996 to 2010. And from that, they could tell who contracted HIV from who, by tracing the evolution of virus.</p> <p>And what they showed was—they did some clever modeling—that if half of those men had been tested annually for HIV and the positive ones had been put on treatment and the other half had been put on PrEP, roughly 66 percent of the infections could have been prevented. This is basically making a strong case for why PrEP should be part of the sort of gamut of things that we’re doing to tackle HIV.</p>