

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) in Virginia

- Fact Sheet for Medical Providers -

What is EPT?

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) is the clinical practice of treating the sex partners of patients diagnosed with sexually transmitted infections (STIs) without an intervening medical evaluation. It is also sometimes referred to as patient-delivered partner therapy (PDPT). It is an evidence-based strategy targeting partners who are otherwise unlikely or unable to obtain a timely medical assessment. The ultimate goal of EPT is to reduce the likelihood of reinfection for the index patient, prevent sequelae, and halt the further spread of infection.

EPT in Virginia

As of July 1, 2021, the Code of Virginia [[Section §54.1-3303.B](#)] was revised to allow practitioners to prescribe antibiotic therapy for the sexual partner(s) of a patient diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease, without first establishing the bona fide practitioner-patient relationship normally required, when providing EPT consistent with current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) [treatment recommendations](#).

EPT Best Practices

The CDC recommends dispensing medications directly to the patient for their partners when possible. However, clinicians should consider costs and patient/partner circumstances. EPT can be offered to patients/partners regardless of their age and gender. EPT may be offered to men who have sex with men (MSM), but should not be *routinely* offered to MSM because of a high risk for coexisting infections (especially undiagnosed HIV infection) in their partners.

Recommended Treatment Regimens for EPT

Index Patient Diagnosis	EPT Treatment Regimen
Chlamydia (only)	Doxycycline 100 mg twice daily for 7 days*
Gonorrhea (only)	Cefixime (e.g. Suprax) 800 mg orally once
Gonorrhea (with confirmed or suspected chlamydia co-infection)	Cefixime (e.g. Suprax) 800 mg orally once PLUS Doxycycline 100 mg twice daily for 7 days*

Tips for Writing EPT Prescriptions

- Write a separate prescription for each sex partner. Do not add additional doses to the index patient's prescription.
- Clearly write 'EPT' or 'expedited partner therapy' on the prescription.
- If known, write the partner's name, date of birth, and address on the prescription. Otherwise, just write 'expedited partner therapy' or 'EPT.'

***Substitute Azithromycin 1 gram orally as a single dose for partners who may be pregnant or unlikely to adhere to a 7-day regimen.**

Additional Considerations for EPT

Health care providers and pharmacists who prescribe or dispense EPT should counsel patients to encourage their partners to seek medical care and provide patients with written materials for each partner. These materials should include: information about chlamydia and gonorrhea infections and the importance of seeking a medical evaluation, especially for pregnant women and MSM; medication instructions; warnings about adverse allergic reactions; and advice to abstain from sexual activity for 7-10 days after single dose antibiotics (or to wear a condom with each sex act if

Clinician Resources

Written informational materials on EPT for patients and their sex partners are available for download on the VDH [website \(www.vdh.virginia.gov\)](http://www.vdh.virginia.gov).

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assistance is not possible).