



# Risk Factors Associated With Non-Prescription Use of HIV Pre-Exposure Prophylaxis

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## Background

- HIV pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and required tests before and during PrEP use are currently not covered by health insurances in Germany.
- Affordable generic PrEP can be purchased with private prescriptions since October 2017 (price reduction from ~820 Euro to ~50 Euro per month).
- Non-prescription PrEP use with drugs obtained through informal sources can occur.
- Objective of this study:** To estimate the extent of continued informal PrEP use in German PrEP users and identify possible risk factors associated with non-prescription PrEP use.

## Results

- 2,005 current PrEP users recruited
- 78.7% participants completed the survey
- Average number of days with PrEP use per month: 26+ days: 73.1%, 12-25 days: 10.5%, 1-11 days: 16.4%

Table 1: Sources of PrEP in Germany

PrEP Source	n [%]
Prescription use	80.4 %
Ordering online	9.9 %
Buying drugs in another country	3.2 %
Through friends	2.8 %
Using medication from post-exposure prophylaxis as PrEP	1.0 %
Buying from dealers	0.8 %
Sex parties	0.8 %
Other sources	1.0 %

PrEP users with non-prescription drug use:

- tended to have used PrEP longer than PrEP users with prescription drug use (median: 7-12 months vs. 3-6 months,  $p < 0.001$ ).
- were more likely to use PrEP intermittently or on demand (adjusted OR = 2.3, 95% CI 1.3, 4.2).
- were at higher risk of not obtaining medical tests before starting PrEP (adjusted OR = 3.3, 95% CI 1.6, 7.0) or during PrEP use (adjusted OR = 3.1, 95% CI 2.0, 4.8).

## Conclusion

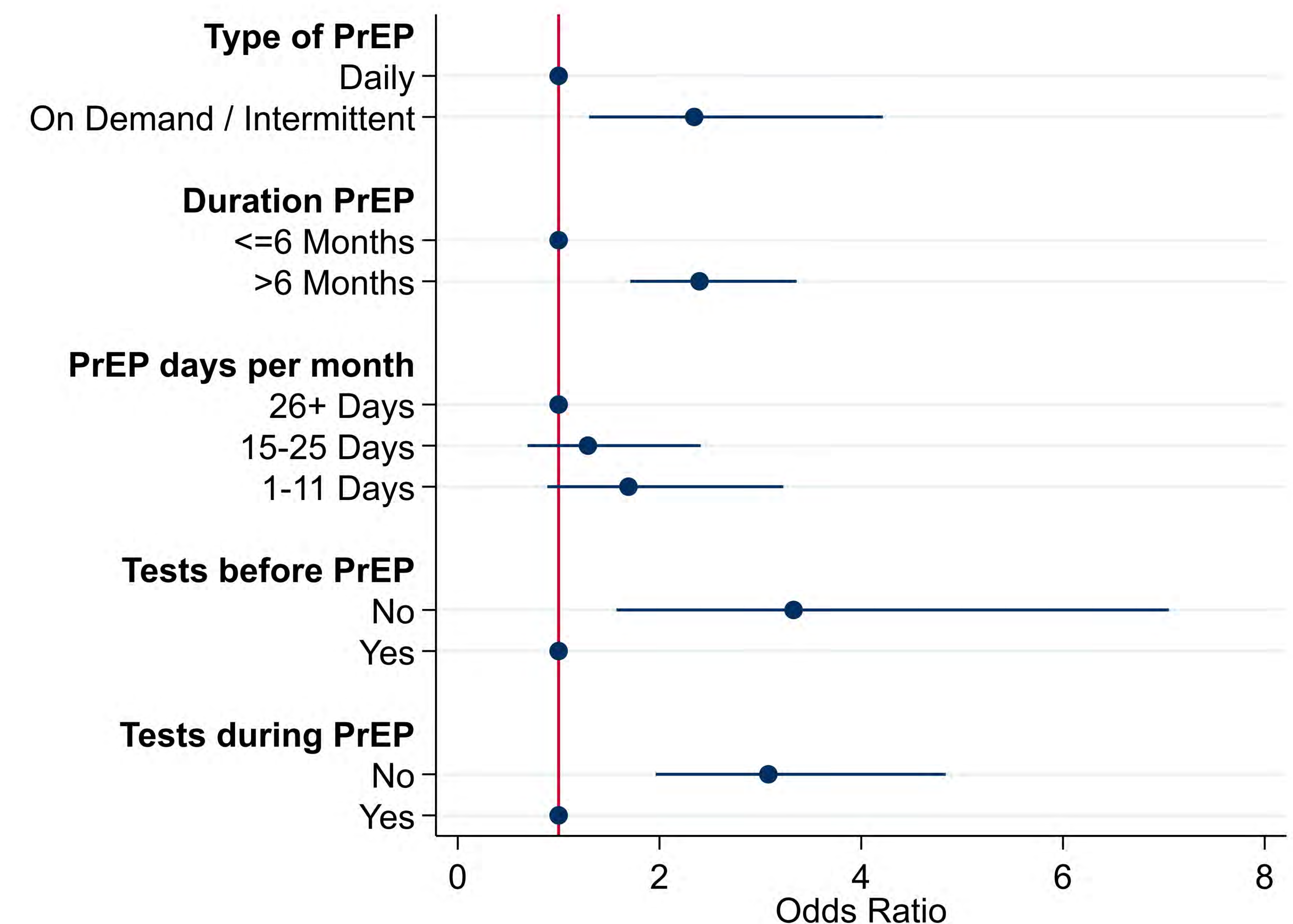
Non-prescription PrEP users were less likely to use PrEP according to current guidelines. This could increase the risk for undetected HIV and STI infections in this group. Our findings highlight the need for patients to access PrEP through healthcare systems in order to allow safe use.

## Methods

- Recruitment of current PrEP users from 24<sup>th</sup> July to 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2018
- Recruitment for an anonymous online survey via geolocation dating apps for MSM, community-based HIV testing sites, and a community website in Germany.
- Prescription PrEP use = use of PrEP obtained through German pharmacies and clinical trials;
- Other sources = non-prescription drug use.
- Factors associated with non-prescription PrEP use were assessed using multivariable logistic regression models.

- Median age: 38 years (IQR: 31–45)
- Medical tests before starting PrEP: 95.4%
- Medical tests during PrEP use: 86.9%

Figure 1: Risk factors associated with non-prescription PrEP use



Multivariable logistic regression model adjusting for age, annual gross income, country of origin, affordability of PrEP, condom use, outness about PrEP, and number of partners.