

Long-Acting Injectable Cabotegravir Dosing

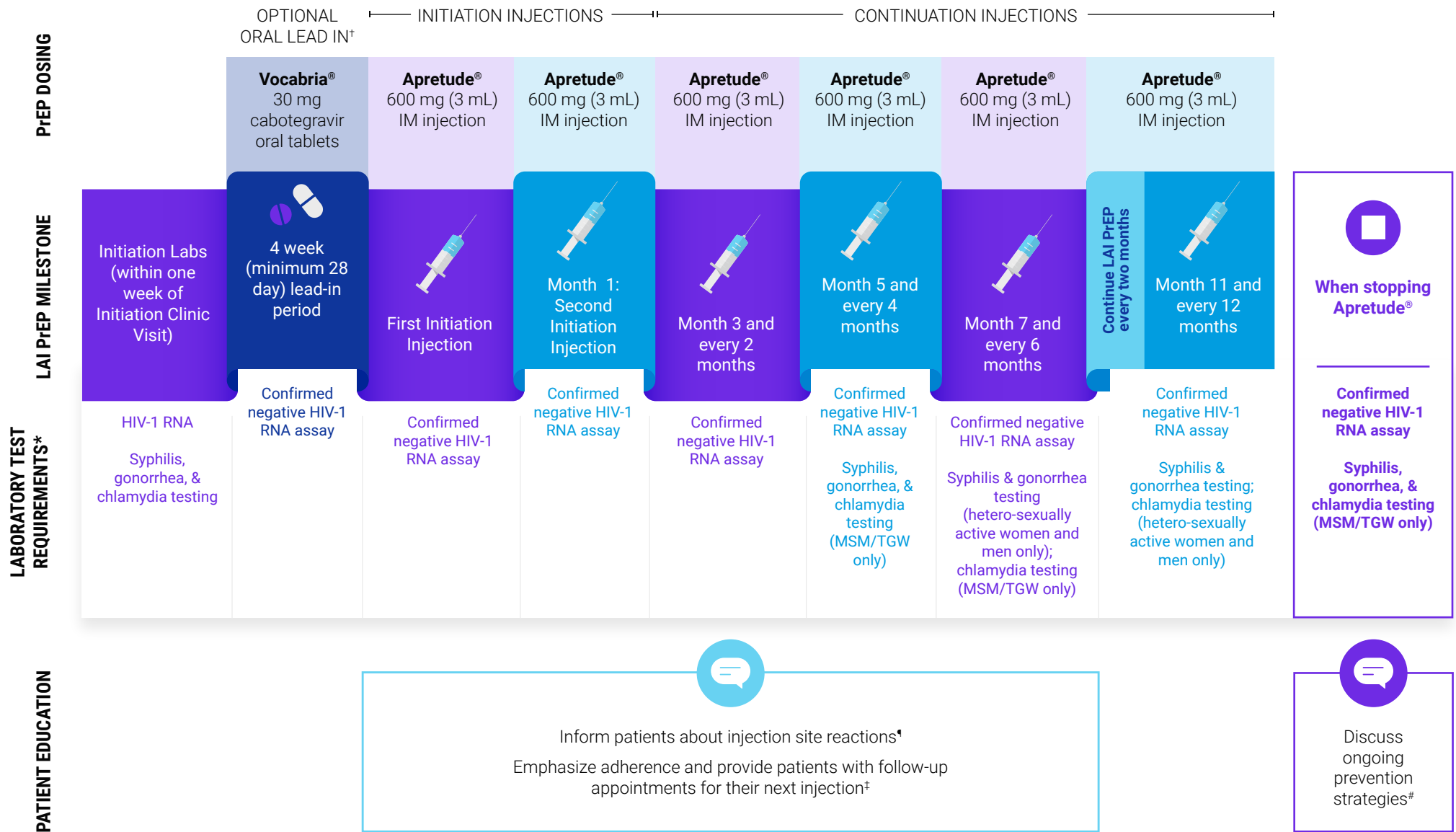
AN INFOGRAPHIC

On December 20, 2021, the U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Apretude® (cabotegravir extended-release injectable suspension) for PrEP, making it the first long-acting injectable medication option available for the primary prevention of HIV. Apretude® is manufactured by ViiV Healthcare.

Apretude® is indicated for adults and adolescents weighing at least 77 pounds who are at risk of sexually acquiring HIV. Cabotegravir injections may be especially appropriate for patients with significant renal disease, those who have had difficulty with oral PrEP adherence, and those who prefer provider-administered injections every two months to an oral PrEP dosing schedule. Long-acting injectable cabotegravir is included in the [CDC's 2021 PrEP Clinical guidelines](#). Additional guidance on prescribing cabotegravir for PrEP and follow up care can be found on pages 47-54. The FDA-approved [full prescribing information](#) is also available. Patient resources and additional information about cabotegravir implementation can also be found in [CDC's 2021 PrEP Update—Clinical Providers' Supplement](#).

This infographic walks through the initiation and dosing schedule for Apretude® to assist HIV prevention programs in implementing long-acting injectable PrEP.





ABBREVIATIONS: IM: Intramuscular; MSM: Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men; TGW: Transgender women; LAI: Long-acting injectable

- * An HIV-1 RNA assay test must be performed within one week prior to each injection of Apretude®. The [CDC's 2021 PrEP Clinical Guidelines](#) details the recommended lab testing schedule for long-acting cabotegravir. More information about initiation and monitoring labs can be found on pages 48-52 of the guidelines.
- † An oral lead-in is not required when initiating Apretude®. It may be used for at least 28 days to assess the tolerability of Apretude before administering the long-acting suspension cabotegravir.
- ‡ Provide proactive management advice, for instance, for the first 2-3 injections take an over-the-counter pain medication within a couple of hours before or soon after the injection and continue as needed for one to two days. After the injection (e.g., returning home), patients should apply a warm compress or heating pad to the injection site for 15-20 minutes.
- ‡ Educate clients on the importance of keeping their follow-up appointments and establish client follow-up practices.
- # Patients discontinuing Apretude® injections who may be at ongoing risk of sexual and injection HIV exposure should be provided with another highly effective HIV prevention method during the months following their last injection, such as oral PrEP (generic TDF/FTC, Truvada®, or Descovy®). Apretude® is a long-acting medicine and its active ingredient may stay in the body for **up to three years in men and four years in women** after the last injection. This time is considered the pharmacokinetic (PK) "tail". If someone contracts HIV while still in the PK "tail" phase following discontinuation of Apretude®, drug resistance to cabotegravir and other integrase strand transfer inhibitors can occur. This can have significant implications for HIV treatment regimen selection. Educating clients regarding the long PK "tail" and discussing the potential need for continued oral PrEP to minimize risk of contracting HIV upon discontinuing Apretude® is strongly recommended.