

**Strategies proven to be effective** *These strategies have been proven effective in preventing HIV transmission. They can be used alone, but since none of them are 100% perfect, it's often a good idea to combine more than one together.*



## COMBINING YOUR BIOMEDICAL STRATEGY WITH THOSE OF YOUR PARTNERS (BIOMED-MATCHING)

**Adapting the prevention strategies that would normally be used, in instances when all partners involved are using a complementary biomedical strategy (PrEP and/or undetectable viral load)**

### Description

- Biomed-matching is a strategy that involves choosing sexual partners based on their use of biomedical prevention strategies (PrEP and undetectable viral load). Described for the first time in 2016, it involves the disclosure of either PrEP use (by an HIV-negative person) or the use of antiretroviral therapy to achieve an undetectable viral load (by an HIV-positive person) to each partner involved in the sexual relation. With this combination of strategies in place, the partners can feel comfortable making the choice not to use condoms.<sup>1</sup>
- A number of combinations are possible for biomed-matching between two partners:
  - PrEP + PrEP
  - Undetectable viral load + Undetectable viral load
  - Undetectable viral load + PrEP
- Biomed-matching is different from serosorting in that it does not necessarily involve choosing partners based on HIV status, but instead based on the use of biomedical prevention strategies.
- The use of online dating applications can facilitate the disclosure of HIV status and the use of biomedical prevention strategies, which may be more difficult to discuss in person.<sup>1</sup>

### Effectiveness

- The effectiveness of this strategy is reliant on two factors:
  - disclosure that a biomedical prevention strategy is being used
  - appropriate use of a biomedical prevention strategy.
- Since both PrEP and undetectable viral load strategy are highly effective in protecting against HIV transmission, it is likely that biomed-matching is also highly effective as long as each partner strictly follows their treatment.

### Acceptability

- According to the study that brought this strategy to light, biomed-matching is mainly used by HIV-positive men.<sup>1</sup>
- Since this strategy has only recently emerged, few studies have evaluated its acceptability. However, it can be assumed that the acceptability of biomed matching derives from the acceptability of the biomedical prevention strategies it involves (PrEP and undetectable viral load).

### References

1. Newcomb, M. E., Mongrella, M. C., Weis, B., McMillen, S. J., & Mustanski, B. (2016). Partner Disclosure of PrEP Use and Undetectable Viral Load on Geosocial Networking Apps: Frequency of Disclosure and Decisions about Condomless Sex. *Journal of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndromes*, 71(2), 200–206.