



ATN 142: PrEPared, Protected, emPowered (P3) Summary of Study Results

Full Title

Adolescent Medicine Trials Network for HIV/AIDS Interventions Protocol 142: P3 (Prepared, Protected, emPowered): A Study to Test the Efficacy of a Social Networking, Gamification, and Adherence Support App to Improve PrEP Adherence

Study Description

Young cisgender men who have sex with men (YMSM) and young transgender women who have sex with men (YTWSM) are more affected by HIV compared to others. Pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) is proven to be an effective and safe way to prevent HIV among YMSM and YTWSM. However, many people who could benefit from PrEP are not on PrEP or do not take PrEP as prescribed. When a person does not take PrEP as prescribed, it means they may not be fully protected against HIV. Current programs meant to encourage continued PrEP use are limited and have not proven to be highly effective. With the widespread use and availability of smartphones, mobile applications (apps) can be used to encourage continued PrEP use as prescribed among YMSM and YTWSM.

The P3(Prepared, Protected, emPowered) study was designed to test how a mobile app may or may not improve how often YMSM and YTWSM aged 16-24 years take daily PrEP. The P3 app included social networking and game-based components are designed to encourage taking daily PrEP as prescribed. Some participants received an extra component within the app – coaching specifically designed to help YMSM and YTWSM take daily PrEP more often. The coaching was delivered through in-app text messaging (short message service, SMS).

Between May 2019 to March 2021, 246 participants, who identified as YMSM or YTWSM aged 16-24 were enrolled in the P3 study. Participants were enrolled from 9 ATN [Adolescent Medicine Trials Network] sites across the United States (Atlanta, GA; Boston, MA; Charlotte, NC; Chapel Hill, NC; Houston, TX; Bronx, NY; Philadelphia, PA; Tampa, FL; and Chicago, IL). After enrollment, participants who were beginning PrEP or already on PrEP, were randomly assigned to receive one of the three options while in the study: routine care only; routine care and the P3 mobile app; or routine care and P3 mobile app plus in-app coaching. The intervention lasted for 3 months, and participants remained in the study for a total of 6-months. Those participants who received access to the P3 app and P3 app plus coaching had access to the app during the entire study period.

Study Results

- After 3 months, YMSM and YTWSM who had access to the P3 app or P3 app with coaching took daily PrEP more often compared to those who did not have access.



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- After 3 months, YMSM and YTWSM who had access to the P3 app or P3 app with coaching took daily PrEP more often compared to those who did not have access.
- After 6 months, there was no evidence that the P3 app or P3 app with coaching increased how often YMSM and YTWSM took PrEP.
- Most YMSM and YTWSM who had access to the P3 app were satisfied with it and most would recommend the app to a friend.
- The study results demonstrate the app's ability to increase how often participants YMSM and YTWSM take PrEP in the short-term.

Study Implications

Overall, P3 and P3 plus coaching did show an increase in how often YMSM and YTWSM took PrEP at 3 months. Additional studies are needed to confirm these results and to study the longer-term effects that mobile apps can have on taking daily PrEP as prescribed and continued PrEP use.

Authors

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