Descovy

**Generic Name:** tenofovir alafenamide + emtricitabine  
**Pronunciation:** des-KOH-vee  
**Abbreviation:** FTC + TAF  
**Drug Class:** [Nucleoside/Nucleotide Reverse Transcriptase Inhibitors (NRTIs)](https://aidsinfo.nih.gov/guidelines/html/1/adult-and-adolescent-arv-guidelines/)  
**Company:** Gilead Sciences  
**Approval Status:** Approved  
**Generic Version Available:** No

### Drug Indication

Descovy is a component of recommended and alternative HIV treatment regimens, as indicated by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Panel on Antiretroviral Guidelines for Adults and Adolescents. Descovy is also approved for use as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) under some circumstances.


### General Info

Descovy is an HIV medication. It contains two nucleoside/nucleotide reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NRTIs). It was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) in April 2016.

Descovy is a fixed-dose combination containing tenofovir alafenamide, or TAF, and emtricitabine. TAF is similar to tenofovir disoproxil fumarate (TDF), sold separately as Viread and a component of Stribild, Atripla, Complera and Truvada. TAF, however, can be used at much lower doses and causes fewer kidney- and bone-related side effects.

For HIV treatment, Descovy must be used in combination with other antiretroviral drugs.

In October 2019, Descovy was also approved for use as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to
reduce the risk of acquiring HIV through sex, with the exception of receptive vaginal or frontal sex. A Phase III study of men and transgender women showed that it works as well as Truvada (tenofovir disoproxil fumarate + emtricitabine) for HIV prevention. There has not been a trial of Descovy PrEP for cisgender (non-trans) women.

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**Dosage**

**Adult Dose:** One tablet once a day. Each tablet contains 200mg emtricitabine + 25mg tenofovir alafenamide fumarate (TAF).

**Pediatric Dose:** One tablet once a day for individuals age 12 to 18 years who weigh more than 77lbs (35kg).

**Dosing Info:** Take with or without food.

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**Side Effects**

The most common side effect is nausea.

Descovy may lead to new or worsening kidney problems, though this risk is lower compared with Truvada. Your healthcare provider may do blood tests to check your kidneys before and during treatment with Descovy.

Descovy may lead to bone problems, though this risk is lower compared with Truvada. Problems may include bones getting soft or thin, which could lead to fractures. Your healthcare provider may do tests to check your bones.

If you also have hepatitis B virus (HBV) and take Descovy, your hepatitis may become worse if you stop taking Descovy. Do not stop taking Descovy without first talking with your healthcare provider.

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**Drug Interactions**

The following medications are not recommended while you are being treated with Descovy:

**Antibiotics:** Mycobutin (rifabutin), Rifamate (rifampin), Priftin (rifapentine)

**Antiretrovirals:** Aptivus (tipranavir/ritonavir)

**Anti-seizure medications:** Tegretol (carbamazepine), Trileptal (oxcarbazepine), Luminal (phenobarbital), Dilantin (phenytoin)

**Herbal products:** St. John’s wort (or products containing St. John’s wort)

**Antivirals:** Hepsera (adefovir)
Descovy should not be combined with any HIV medications that contain any of the active ingredients in Descovy. These include: Atripla, Complera, Edurant (unless recommended by your health care provider and you are taking rifabutin), Emtriva, Genvoya, Odefsey, Stribild or Viread. Combining Descovy with HIV medications containing active ingredients similar to those in Descovy should also be avoided. These include Combivir, Epivir and Epzicom.

For a review of these and other possibly drug interactions, consult the Descovy package insert: http://www.gilead.com/~/media/files/pdfs/medicines/hiv/descovy/descovy_pi.pdf?la=en

Other Info

Before taking this medication, tell your doctor if you have kidney disease or liver disease including hepatitis B. In addition, tell your doctor if you are pregnant or planning to become pregnant, if you are breast feeding and all your medical conditions, including all prescription and over-the-counter medications and supplements you are taking.

For More Info: https://www.descovy.com/
Co-Pay Program Info: https://www.descovy.com/co-pay-assistance
Patient Assistance Program Info: https://www.poz.com/basics/hiv-basics/drug-assistance-programs

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https://www.poz.com/drug/descovy