



## Expedited Partner Therapy FAQs for California Pharmacists

### What is Expedited Partner Therapy?

Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) is the clinical practice of treating sex partners with a diagnosed STD without the healthcare provider first examining the partner. Multiple randomized controlled trials have shown EPT to reduce chlamydia and gonorrhea reinfection in the index patient.<sup>1</sup> EPT is effective, safe, acceptable to patients and partners, and has been allowable in California since 2001. In fact, EPT is legally permissible in 45 states and the District of Columbia and only prohibited in one state (South Carolina).<sup>2</sup>

### California law supports EPT

[California Health & Safety Code \(HSC\) § 120582](#) states that a provider “may dispense, furnish, or otherwise provide prescription antibiotic drugs to the sexual partner or partners of a patient with a diagnosed sexually transmitted chlamydia, gonorrhea, or other sexually transmitted infection, as determined by the department, without examination of the patient’s sexual partner or partners.” [CA HSC § 120582](#) means that pharmacists can fill these valid prescriptions to treat STDs and reduce the burden of STDs in your community.

### EPT is now covered by Family PACT + Medi-Cal

Effective February 1, 2020, EPT for the prevention of reinfection of chlamydia, gonorrhea, and trichomoniasis is a covered service for Medi-Cal and Family PACT beneficiaries. For more information on this policy change please refer to [Medi-Cal’s Preventative Services Guide](#), [“Benefits: Family-Planning Related Services”](#) and [FPACT’s Billing Guide](#).

### What medications will be prescribed?

According to CDC Guidelines, partners with chlamydia should be treated with [azithromycin 1 g orally x 1 dose OR 100 mg doxycycline twice a day for 7 days](#). Partners with gonorrhea should be treated with [cefixime 800 mg orally x 1 dose](#). Partners with trichomoniasis should be treated with [metronidazole 2 g orally x 1 dose OR tinidazole 2 g orally x 1 dose](#).<sup>3</sup> Treatment recommendations may change with the forthcoming 2021 STD Treatment Guidelines. Please visit the CDC website to keep up to date with the newest recommendations.

### What will EPT Rx’s look like?

For Medi-Cal and Family PACT patients, pharmacists should expect EPT prescriptions to include the name of the (index) patient seen by the prescribing provider and diagnosed with an STD. If multiple doses are prescribed, consult patient or provider on the number of partners intended to be treated and package individually. EPT prescription benefits for patients with private insurance may vary, please contact the payer directly for more information.

If the recommended gonorrhea treatment above is not available, the following alternate regimens may be furnished:

- + Cefpodoxime\* 400 mg orally BID
- + Additional alternative regimens can be found at: <https://www.cdc.gov/std/dstdp/DCL-STDTreatment-COVID19-04062020.pdf>

\* Cefpodoxime is only an alternative for male urethritis with inferior efficacy at other infection sites.

## Example Rxs:

Family PACT and Medi-Cal EPT prescriptions may be written for the total number of doses to be dispensed under the index patient's name.

Other EPT prescriptions (commercial plans, cash pay, etc.) may be written for the medications to treat an individual partner but may not contain the partner's name or their date of birth, similar to the example on the right.

<b>AMY PRESCRIBER, M.D.</b>		
Ph: 888-555-1234	234 Treatment Way	NPI: 1234567899
Fax: 888-555-5678	Sacramento, CA 95816	DEA: AP1234567
Name: <u>John Q. Patient</u>	DOB: <u>1/8/1990</u>	
Address: <u>123 Any St, Sacramento, CA</u>	Date: <u>9/1/2020</u>	
<b>Rx:</b> Cefixime 400 mg cap Patient and each partner to take 2 caps PO today Disp #8 caps		
Refill <u>0</u> Times <u>Amy Prescriber</u>		M.D.

<b>AMY PRESCRIBER, M.D.</b>		
Ph: 888-555-1234	234 Treatment Way	NPI: 1234567899
Fax: 888-555-5678	Sacramento, CA 95816	DEA: AP1234567
Name: <u>Partner of John Q. Patient</u>	DOB: _____	
Address: <u>123 Any St, Sacramento, CA</u>	Date: <u>9/1/2020</u>	
<b>Rx:</b> Cefixime 400 mg cap 2 caps PO today Disp #2 caps		
Refill <u>0</u> Times <u>Amy Prescriber</u>		M.D.

## What about insurance audits?

These prescriptions are valid as written under the authority of [CA HSC § 120582](#).

## What about patients without insurance?

These prescriptions should be filled promptly for any patient presenting with them including those without insurance who may need to pay out-of-pocket.

## Are there existing information sheets about EPT that can be provided to patients + partners?

Essential Access Health has patient and partner information sheets available in several languages:

<https://www.essentialaccess.org/pdpt/resources>.

Essential Access Health also provides technical assistance on Expedited Partner Therapy and distributes free medication via our CT/GC Patient-Delivered Partner Therapy Distribution Program. For more information, visit us at

<https://essentialaccess.org/pdpt>.

### Sources:

<sup>1</sup> Effectiveness of EPT in Randomized Controlled Trials

[Trelle S, et al. Improved effectiveness of partner notification for patients with sexually transmitted infections: systematic review. BMJ. 334:354.](#)

Published January 7, 2007

<sup>2</sup> Legal Status of Expedited Partner Therapy (EPT) <https://www.cdc.gov/std/ept/legal/california.htm> Updated May 11, 2020

<sup>3</sup> CDC STD Treatment Guidelines and Interim Guidelines for Disruption of Clinical Services <https://www.cdc.gov/std/tg2015/default.htm> Updated April 6, 2020