



# 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 STI 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 for patients and partners, and has been allowable in California since 2001. In fact, EPT is legally permissible in 46 states and the District of Columbia.<sup>2</sup>

## California law supports EPT

In 2021, California passed Senate Bill 306, which strengthened state law allowing expedited partner therapy (EPT) and expressing explicit liability protection for health care providers and pharmacists. Pharmacists who prescribe, dispense, furnish, or otherwise render EPT, as authorized in BPC 4076, shall not be liable in, and shall not be subject to, a civil, criminal, or administrative action, sanction, or penalty for rendering EPT, if the use of EPT is in compliance with BPC 4076, except in cases of intentional misconduct, gross negligence, or wanton or reckless activity.

SB 306 also allows pharmacists to dispense a medication without an individual's name if the prescription includes “expedited partner therapy,” or EPT. The law also requires pharmacists to provide a written notice that describes the right of an individual receiving EPT to consult with a pharmacist about the medication and potential drug interactions.

## 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 FFACT’s Billing Guide.

## What medications will be prescribed?

According to CDC Guidelines, partners should be treated with **Doxycycline 100 mg orally 2x/day for 7 days for chlamydia** OR **Cefixime 800 mg orally for gonorrhea**. For **pregnant partners exposed to chlamydia**, provide **Azithromycin 1 gram orally x 1 dose** in place of Doxycycline.

## What will EPT Rx 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 STI. 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.

## Example Rxs:

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

Other EPT Rxs (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>9/1/2022</u>	
<b>Rx:</b> Doxycycline 100 mg Orally 2x/day for 7 days Please dispense in 3 labeled bottles of #14 for index patient and two partners		
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>Expedited Partner Therapy</u>	DOB: _____	
Address: <u>123 Any St, Sacramento, CA</u>	Date: <u>9/1/2022</u>	
<b>Rx:</b> Doxycycline 100 mg orally 2x/day for 7 days Disp #14		
Refill <u>0</u> Times <u>Amy Prescriber</u>		M.D.

## What about insurance audits?

These Rxs are valid as written under the authority of CA HSC § 120582.

## What about patients without insurance?

These Rxs 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 January 1, 2022

<sup>3</sup> CDC STD Treatment Guidelines and Interim Guidelines for Disruption of Clinical Services <https://www.cdc.gov/std/treatment-guidelines/default.htm> Updated July 22, 2021