

2. HERPES

INTRODUCTION

Genital herpes is a sexually transmitted infection caused by HSV (Herpes Simplex Virus). This virus affects the genitals, the cervix^(x4), and skin in other parts of the body.

Herpes is a chronic condition. However, many people never have symptoms even though they are carrying the virus.

Most people with HSV have recurring genital herpes. When a person is first infected, the recurrences, if they do occur, tend to happen more frequently. Over time the remission periods get longer and longer. Each occurrence tends to become less severe with time.

TYPES OF HSV

There are two types of Herpes Simplex Virus:

1. HSV-1 (Herpes Type 1)
2. HSV-2 (Herpes Type 2)

1. HSV-1

HSV-1 ^{which} most commonly causes oral herpes, can cause genital herpes through oral-genital contact. (cold sores around the mouth)

Infection with HSV-1 can happen from general interactions such as:

- * eating from the same utensils
- * sharing lip balm
- * kissing

HSV-2

Cases of genital herpes are typically caused by HSV-2, which is primarily transmitted through sexual contact.

MODE OF TRANSMISSION

The Herpes Simplex Virus is easily transmissible between humans. It is passed from one person to another by close, direct contact. The most common mode of transmission is through vaginal, anal, or oral sex.

SYMPTOMS → Refer to book

When someone becomes infected with HSV, it will generally remain dormant. If symptoms do occur, they can include blisters on the genital, or sores around the mouth. Most people who are infected with HSV are unaware bcz their symptoms are so

slight, and many people have no discernible (noticeable) symptoms at all.

Many people do not have apparent symptoms for many months, or even years after becoming infected. Those who do have symptoms during the initial period will usually notice them about 4-7 days after being infected.

PRIMARY INFECTION SYMPTOMS

Primary Infection is a term used for an outbreak (sudden violent spontaneous occurrence) of genital herpes that occurs when a person is first infected.

Primary infection symptoms, if they are experienced, are usually more severe than later recurrences.

Symptoms can last up to 20 days and may include:

1. Blisters and ulceration on the cervix
2. Vaginal discharge
3. Pain when urinating
4. Fever
5. Malaise (feeling unwell)

6. Cold sores around the mouth

7. Red blisters - these are generally painful; they soon burst to form painful sores that can last up to 3 weeks. The blisters burst and leave ulcers on the external genital area, thighs, buttocks, and rectum.

In most cases the ulcers will heal, and the patient will not have any lasting scars.

RECURRENT INFECTION SYMPTOMS

These symptoms tend to be less severing and donot last as long bcz the patient's body has built up some immunity to the virus. In most cases, symptoms will not last for more than ten days. They include:

- * Burning / tingling around genitals before blisters appear.
- * Women may have blisters and ulceration on the cervix
- * Cold sores around the mouth.
- * Red blisters.

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DIAGNOSIS

Herpes is much easier to diagnose when the infection is still present. A swab sample of fluid from the infected area is taken which may require gently breaking the blister. The sample is tested in the laboratory.

Blood tests looking for antibodies to HSV-1 and HSV-2 can also help diagnose these infections. This is especially helpful when there are no sores present. However, blood tests may miss very recent infections.

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TREATMENT

SELF-HELP

- ✧ OTC Painkillers - acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- ✧ Some ppl find that bathing in lightly salted water helps relieve symptoms.
- ✧ Ice packs can help.
- ✧ Applying Vaseline (or some other petroleum jelly) to the affected area.
- ✧ Avoiding tight clothing around affected area.
- ✧ Washing hands thoroughly, especially after touching the affected area.

✧

MEDICATION

There is no drug that can get rid of the virus. The doctor may prescribe an antiviral medicine in the form of an ointment or pills which prevents the virus from multiplying. Antiviral tablets will help the outbreak clear up faster - they will also help reduce the severity of symptoms. Antivirals are generally given the first time a patient has symptoms. As recurrent outbreaks are milder, treatment is not usually necessary.

PREVENTION

Although there is no cure for herpes, measures can be taken to avoid

becoming - infected, or to prevent spreading HSV to another person. Some preventative measures include:

1. Try to avoid direct physical contact with other people.
2. Don't share any items that can pass the virus around, such as cups, towels, clothing, makeup, or lipbalm.
3. Don't participate in oral sex, kissing, or any other type of sexual activity during an outbreak.
4. Wash ur hands thoroughly and apply medication with cotton swabs to reduce contact with sores.

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