



Herpes Simplex Virus

- Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV) is a contagious viral infection that occurs most commonly on the lips and in the genital area. It can occur on other areas of the body also. It typically recurs in the same general location.
- It may be sexually transmitted in the genital/buttock area. When active lesions are present, the virus can easily be sexually transmitted. Abstaining from sexual activity is advised. Condoms may help prevent transmission. However, herpes may be transmitted from asymptomatic persons before lesions appear. Women may shed asymptotically from the cervix as well. Be aware that there remains a risk of transmitting the virus, even if you have no lesions. It may be impossible to determine whom you contacted this virus from because of this asymptomatic viral shedding.
- Herpes virus types: Type 2 usually affects the buttock or genital area. The initial episode may be so mild that it is not recognized. Years later, a recurrence may be mistaken for a first episode, leading to false accusations about the source of the virus. Type 1 usually affects the face/lips but may occur in the genital area.
- Diagnosis is made by culturing a new active blister. Even a negative culture does not guarantee that you do not have the virus. Sometimes the virus does not grow in the culture. You may need to have repeat testing when another new lesion develops.
- High risk people: Pregnant women should avoid sexual contact with a partner who has active genital lesions. Herpes can be serious if contacted by a person with an impaired immune system (newborn, organ transplant, cancer).
- There is no cure for HSV, but there are medications that can suppress or shorten episodes. (Valtrex, Zovirax)
 - If you only have occasional outbreaks, you can take the medication at the first hint of an outbreak and often abort or shorten the episode.
 - If you have many episodes each year, you may take medication on a daily basis to prevent recurrences.
- For further genital HSV information, please contact:
 - Herpes Resource Center: 1-800-230-6039
 - National STD Hotline: 1-800-227-8922

For Questions or Emergency Care:

Call the office at **601-815-3374**. You may need to speak with the doctor on-call.