

Colorado State University-Pueblo
Student Health Services
2200 Bonforte Ave
Pueblo, CO 81001
(719) 549-2830
Information Genital Herpes Simplex

Definition: The Herpes simplex virus is one of the most common infectious agents of humans. It is transmitted only by direct contact with the virus from an active infected oral or genital lesion. However, there have been cases where the virus was transmitted sexually even though there were no active lesions. The herpes simplex virus (HSV) are classified in two categories:

1. HSV Type 1: Usually affects body sites above the waist (mouth, lips, eyes, fingers)
2. HSV Type 2: Usually involves body sites below the waist, primarily the genitals.

Genital herpes can be caused either by herpes simplex virus 1 or 2. HSV 1 can be spread genitally though oral sex. (Remember a “cold sore” is a form of herpes).

Symptoms: May last 2-3 weeks

1. Painful sores that may itch. The genital lesion is very similar to cold sores or fever blisters. The lesions can occur 4 to 7 days up to 4 weeks after initial contact.
2. Fever or flu-like symptoms.
3. Burning sensation during urination.
4. Swollen groin lymph nodes

Diagnosis

1. Fluid from the lesion can be collected and analyzed.
2. Examination and clinical history generally is the way primary care provider’s diagnosis HSV 1 or 2.
3. A blood test can be done for both HSV 1 and 2 antibodies in your blood.

Treatment

1. Tepid bath and/or cool moist tea bags can help the pain of the lesion.
2. Cotton underwear and loose clothing.
3. Prevention of a secondary infection. (make sure your partner wears a condom and there is not skin-to-skin contact while a lesion is active)
4. Acyclovir is the common medication for Herpes Simplex Virus 1 and 2. (This medication is not a cure but it can decrease the severity and duration of the outbreak. Remember, once you are infected with HSV 1 or 2 it is with you for life. Genital herpes outbreak can be suppressed with a daily dose of acyclovir but you can still pass it on to your partner even if there are no active lesions.)
5. Women with chronic herpes should have a year PAP.

For more information:

<http://www.cdc.gov>

<http://www.alt.support.herpes>

<http://www.herpes.com>

