

Health Care Education Herpes



Hidaya Foundation

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And when I am sick, then He heals me. - - - Al Quran – Ash-Shuraa, Verse 26:80

Herpes

What is Herpes? Herpes is an infection caused by *Herpes Simplex Virus* (HSV). Oral herpes causes cold sores around the mouth or face. Genital herpes affects the genitals, buttocks or anal area.

How does one get Herpes? Herpes is spread by having sexual relations with someone who has HSV.

It can be spread by having sexual intercourse. It can also be spread by touching the infected area of someone who has herpes.

It causes small, painful sores or blisters. The sores can come and go, but once you get herpes, the virus is always in your body.

What are the symptoms of Herpes? Most people with herpes get signs of the infection, but some people don't.

Most people get blisters or sores. They can show up in any of these places:

- The vagina or penis
- The thighs or buttocks
- The mouth

These blisters or sores are different for everyone which may heal:

- Some people get a painful rash of blisters or sores.
- Some get only a blister or two that just itch.
- Some people feel like they have the flu along with the blisters.
- Some people get the sores only once.
- Some people get them many times.

Even when you have no sores or blisters, and the herpes virus is in your body, you can pass herpes to others.

What is the impact of Herpes on health?

Herpes cannot be cured as of now. Research is continuing. It can cause the following problems:

- Herpes can be passed on to others.
- The person infected with herpes has a higher chance of getting HIV (the virus that causes AIDS).
- A pregnant woman can pass herpes on to her child during child birth.

If a woman has herpes and gets pregnant:

- The doctor needs to be informed that she has herpes.
- She should get prenatal care.

How is Herpes Diagnosed? The signs and symptoms associated with herpes can vary greatly. Health care providers can diagnose herpes by visual inspection if the outbreak is typical, and by taking a sample from the sore(s) and testing it in a laboratory. Herpes virus infections can also be diagnosed between outbreaks by the use of a blood test.

How can Herpes be prevented?

- Avoid sexual contact if you have symptoms, are being treated for, or exposed to herpes.
- Don't have more than one sexual relationship
- Pregnant women should tell the doctor that they have HSV to reduce the risk of passing the virus to the baby. If unsure then ask to be tested for HSV.

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How is Herpes treated? Herpes can't be cured, but there are medicines that may help the sores heal more quickly. Some medicines may also make the blisters come less often, stay a shorter time, and be less painful.

To treat genital herpes:

- Take the medicine your doctor gives you.
- Your partner(s) should get checked for herpes.

If you think you may be pregnant, be sure to tell your doctor before you get treated.

To take care of the sores:

Keep the area clean and dry. Wash gently and dry with a clean, soft towel. Or use a hair dryer set on cool.

Sources: WebMD, Health Central, and other sources freely available on the internet.