

## **UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON HEALTH CENTER**

**-HEALTHBERRY-**  
[www.uh.edu/admin/hc](http://www.uh.edu/admin/hc)

### **HERPES GENITALIS**

Genital Herpes is a sexually transmitted disease. It can involve the penis, vagina, cervix, thighs, and buttocks. It affects all ages and both sexes. It is caused by the Herpes type 2 virus (HSV-2). It is transmitted by sexual partners who have active herpes lesions. The virus lies dormant inside infected cells until conditions for multiplication are right; then the infected cells grow.

Painful blisters, preceded by itching, burning, or irritation on the vaginal lips or penis are generally the initial signs and symptoms. In women, the blisters may extend into the vagina to the cervix and urethra. After a few days, the blisters rupture and leave painful, shallow ulcers which last 1 to 3 weeks. Difficult or painful urination, enlarged lymph glands, and fever and general malaise can be present.

Preventive measures include avoiding contact with persons with active disease. Use a condom during intercourse if either partner has inactive genital herpes. Be sure to tell your doctor if you have had herpes or any genital lesions in the past, so that precautions can be taken to prevent infection in the baby. The risk of an outbreak generally increases with concomitant illness, use of immunosuppressive drugs, stress, genital trauma, menstruation, or sunbathing.

Local treatment is directed toward relieving symptoms and preventing complications. Warm baths with a tablespoon of baking soda added can ease discomfort. Women should have an annual pap smear and physical examination to rule out any complications. Topical acyclovir may be used directly on the lesions, and oral acyclovir or its congeners can be used to shorten or abort the attack. For some patients, the antiviral medications may be prescribed for prevention purposes.

If you have signs or symptoms of Herpes genitalis, be sure to check with the University of Houston Health clinic for further information and treatment.

We at the Health Center will be happy to help you.



**Healthfully yours,**

**Dr. Healthberry**

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For questions or comments you can;

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