



Genital herpes Fact Sheet

Genital herpes is a common STD caused by two types of viruses: HSV-1 and HSV-2. It is most commonly symptomless, but can still spread to others.

Symptoms: Usually symptomless. If symptoms occur, they appear around 2 weeks after exposure

In women:

- Vaginal discharge
- Itching
- Blisters on or around genital area
- Flu-like symptoms
- Bleeding between periods

In men:

- Discharge from penis
- Painful or difficult urination
- Blisters on or around the genital area or rectum
- Flu-like symptoms

Transmitted through:

- Transfer of saliva
- Vaginal, anal, or oral sex
- Infected mother to newborn during vaginal childbirth

Prevention:

- Abstinence
- Avoidance of sexual contact with infected partner
- Appropriate use of latex condoms consistently and correctly during any kind of sex
- Screening during pregnancy
- Notifying all previous sexual partners if infected

Treatment:

- No cure for herpes, but antiviral medications can shorten and prevent outbreaks

Consequences without treatment:

- Recurrent painful genital sores
- Increased risk for HIV

Consequences without treatment in pregnancy:

- Fatal infection in newborns

Contact Information