



# GENITAL HERPES

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## What is it?

- Genital herpes is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by the Herpes Simplex Virus (HSV).

## For more information, visit:

- [sexualhealthontario.ca](http://sexualhealthontario.ca)

## Signs and Symptoms

- There are two types of herpes viruses that can cause herpes:
  - HSV-1: commonly causes cold sores or fever blisters on the lips
  - HSV-2: most common cause of sores or blisters on the genitals
- Once you are infected with the virus, you carry it for life.

## How do you get it?

- The virus is spread through direct contact with the skin of an infected person.
- It is spread to others most easily while sores are present.
- However, the virus may be on the skin even when there are no sores or blisters and be passed on to a partner during sexual activity.

## Treatment

- There is no cure for herpes at this time, however, treatment with antiviral medications may heal sores more quickly if taken as soon as itching or early blisters signal that an outbreak is about to occur.
- Taking antiviral medications on a daily basis may also reduce the number of repeat outbreaks.