

## SKIN AND SOFT TISSUE INFECTIONS

### Herpes Simplex Virus

#### Cold Sores:

- **Most cold sores resolve after 5 days without treatment.**
- Topical antivirals applied prodromally can reduce the duration by 12–18 hours.
- **If frequent, severe, and predictable triggers:** consider oral prophylaxis: **aciclovir 400mg, twice daily, for 5–7 days.**
- Topical antivirals may reduce the duration of lesions but only if applied in the first 24-48 hours. They do not prevent recurrences.
- Seek specialist advice for immunocompromised patients, pregnant patients near term and neonates.

#### Eczema herpeticum:

- Send a viral swab to confirm but start empirical treatment. If the patient is well with only localised disease, prescribe oral aciclovir as below.
- If a patient is systemically unwell or there is extensive involvement, refer to the on-call Dermatologist.
- If eczema herpeticum involves the skin around the eyes, the patient should be referred for same-day ophthalmological and dermatological advice.

#### Genital herpes:

- Consider referral to an integrated sexual health clinic for diagnosis, treatment, contact tracing and STI screening.
- Seek specialist advice for pregnant women.
- Oral aciclovir can be used if within 5 days of onset.
- For treatment of recurrences, or for suppression, seek advice from integrated sexual health centres.

#### Treatment: Genital herpes

Drug	Dose	Duration of TX
Aciclovir	Adult: 400mg TDS	5 days
	Child 1 – 23 months: 100mg 5x/day	5 days
	Child ≥2yrs: 200mg 5x/day	5 days
<b><i>If compliance is likely to be poor, as 10 times the cost of aciclovir:</i></b>		
Valaciclovir	500mg BD	5 days

Version Control- Herpes Simplex Virus			
Version	Author(s)	Date	Changes
V2.1	Shary Walker, Interface and Formulary Pharmacist	19/08/21	1. Updated children's dosing in alignment with BNF age bands.