

Session One

LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN ORAL
ANTIVIRAL THERAPIES

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8:45 am – 9:05 am
Saturday, Nov 5

Herpes simplex viruses HSV1, HSV2 are very ubiquitous pathogens that produce oral labial and genital herpes infections. Oral herpes is extremely common and genital herpes is the most common sexually transmitted disease worldwide.

Our knowledge of the clinical pathogenesis manifestations of HSV infections has been paralleled by advances in the treatment of these infections with antiviral agents.

Previously, topical therapy with acyclovir was used. This was superseded by oral acyclovir, and subsequently, by valacyclovir and famciclovir. With further investigations, shorter and shorter courses of the antivirals have been shown to be effective.

Regarding oral labial herpes, it is known that valacyclovir 2 grams every 12 hours for 2 doses will prevent outbreak of cold sores if taken early in the prodrome¹. More recently, it has been shown that famciclovir 1500 mg po x 1 will also prevent cold sore outbreaks and speed healing.

Regarding herpes simplex genitalis, we are increasingly becoming aware of the concept of asymptomatic shedding, and are developing strategies with suppressive dosing regimens. Similarly, ultra short course therapy for episodic dosing has been shown to be effective, i.e. famciclovir 1000 mg po x 1 dose.

These strategies and the scientific evidence behind them will be discussed.

Reference:

¹Spruance, et al. *Antiviral Res* 53:a53(2002)