

# Herpes: Caring for Sores



Good hygiene matters when you have herpes. Take care of your sores to speed healing. Sores that are not cared for correctly can lead to other infections.

## To ease your symptoms

- Take any medicines as directed.
- Take acetaminophen or ibuprofen for pain.
- Take warm or cool baths to ease itching of sores. And don't share towels or other personal items when you have a sore.
- Women may find it helpful to urinate in a tub of warm water to prevent burning.
- Don't wear tight clothes or nylon underwear. They can trap moisture, cause chafing, and prevent sores from healing.

## To speed healing

- Wash the sores with mild soap and water. And wash your hands with soap and clean, running water for at least 20 seconds after you touch a sore.
- Dry the affected area completely by patting a towel over it. Don't rub. Don't share towels.
- Don't bandage sores. The dry air helps them heal.
- Don't use ointments unless they are prescribed. They hold in moisture and may cause other infections.
- Don't pick at the sores. This can slow healing.
- Don't touch your eyes when you have a sore. The virus may travel from your fingertips to your eyes.

## For more information

[American Sexual Health Association STI Hotline, www.ashasexualhealth.org](http://www.ashasexualhealth.org) 919-361-8488

[CDC, www.cdc.gov/std](http://www.cdc.gov/std) 800-232-4636

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