

# Unprecedented Survey Reveals People Living with Genital Herpes More Troubled with Risk of Transmission than Managing Own Outbreaks

*Eight in Ten (83%) Say they Can Manage Outbreaks,  
But Risk of Transmission Troublesome*

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**Ipsos Reid**

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# Unprecedented Survey Reveals People Living with Genital Herpes More Troubled with Risk of Transmission than Their Own Outbreaks

*Eight in Ten (83%) Say they Can Handle Outbreaks,  
But Risk of Transmission Troublesome*

**Toronto, ON** – An Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of GlaxoSmithKline – the largest survey of its kind – reveals that Canadians living with genital herpes (GH) appear to be more troubled by the chance of transmitting herpes to their partners than they are by managing their own outbreaks. In fact, more than eight in ten (83%) GH sufferers ‘agree’ (42% strongly/41% somewhat) that they can handle the outbreaks of genital herpes, but that it’s the transmitting of the virus that really troubles them.

Furthermore, the survey of 400 people living with genital herpes finds that a solid majority (56%) indicate that they ‘constantly worry’ about the risk of transmission. In addition to gaining patient perspectives, the survey also interviewed 200 doctors, which served to uncover some interesting discrepancies in opinion and perception between physicians and their patients.

Both people living with genital herpes and physicians underestimated the risk of transmitting the virus during times when no signs or symptoms are present – patients estimated this incidence at 51%, while doctors thought it to be 45%. In fact, studies show that 70% of cases are transmitted during these times.



In terms of preventive measures, a majority of Canadians with genital herpes overestimate the effectiveness of condoms, with six in ten (60%) believing that condoms are very effective in preventing someone from transmitting or acquiring genital herpes, and one quarter (25%) think that when experiencing an outbreak of genital herpes their partner will be fully protected from contracting the virus if a condom is used.

With regards to the availability of medication to assist in reducing the risk of passing on the virus, a majority (60%) were not aware of the existence of this type of medication.

*These are the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of GSK from May 15 to June 9, 2006. For the survey, a representative randomly selected sample of 400 Genital Herpes Sufferers was interviewed online, as well as 200 General Practitioner Physicians. With a sample of this size, the results are considered accurate to within  $\pm 6.55$  percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what they would have been had the entire adult population been polled. The margin of error will be larger within regions and for other sub-groupings of the survey population.*

***For more information on this news release, please contact:***

***Sean Simpson  
Research Manager  
Ipsos Reid  
Public Affairs  
(416) 572-4474***

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