

Herpes Simplex: Pathogenesis and Treatment of Ocular Disease

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Our studies show that by PCR 98% of random adults secrete HSV-1 in the tears and saliva at least once during a 30-day period, and that at least 90% of adult cadavers have HSV-1 DNA in the trigeminal ganglia. Systemic antivirals reduce but do not eliminate shedding. This constant production of viral DNA is difficult to explain by present concepts of viral latency. Possible repeated exposure to virus suggests that the peripheral tissue susceptibility may be critical to recurrent disease development. Topical gancyclovir (GCV) gel, in clinical studies, is superior to acyclovir (ACV) ointment and is probably less toxic than trifluridine (TFT) in treating epithelial keratitis. GCV is the first drug to clinically treat adenovirus infection. In vitro GCV is synergistic with TFT and significantly less toxic.