MANAGEMENT OF GENITAL HERPES SIMPLEX IN CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Herpes Simplex is a virus that may infect the skin (including the genitalia) or mucous membrane in various parts of the body – commonly in the form of “cold sores” – often around the mouth. It causes clusters of painful blisters or sores. It also causes a systemic illness in babies who are vertically infected.

Genital Herpes Simplex is transmitted through skin to skin contact with Herpes blisters or ulcers. It can also be acquired through asymptomatic viral shedding. In adults, it is usually sexually transmitted. The evidence base in children is small but suggests sexual contact to be the source in most cases, although horizontal transmission is possible. The virus can survive for long periods in cells in the body before becoming an activate infection.

If, after an appropriate risk assessment, a sexual health professional is assured that a young person aged 13 years and over, presenting with genital Herpes Simplex, is involved in a consensual relationship with a similar aged partner, it is not necessary to refer to Children’s Social Care. For younger children, or if there are any concerns, referrals / discussions should take place appropriately, as indicated in the flow chart.

Because it is acutely painful, it may be necessary to delay any genital samples for other sexually transmitted infections and it is preferable to defer detailed genital examination by EMCYPSAS for 4 – 6 weeks until healing has taken place, as examination in the acute phase will be distressing for a child or young person.

CONTACT DETAILS: (See flow chart)

FOR REFERRAL TO ACUTE PAEDIATRIC SERVICE
South Derbyshire and Derby City children: Children’s Emergency Department Consultant at Royal Derby Hospital: 01332 786808
North Derbyshire children: Consultant Paediatrician on call at Chesterfield Royal Hospital: 01246 277271

FOR REFERRAL TO INTEGRATED SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICES (ISHS)
Derby City and Derbyshire County: Health Advisor: 08003283383

FOR DISCUSSION WITH EAST MIDLANDS CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE’S SEXUAL ASSAULT SERVICE (EMCYPAS): 0880 183 0023

FOR REFERRAL FOR A CSA (CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE) MEDICAL
South Derbyshire and Derby City children: This may be undertaken by an appropriately trained community paediatrician in South Derbyshire. To arrange, contact Safeguarding Children Unit at Kingsway House on 01332 623700 ext. 31537
North Derbyshire children: refer to EMCYPSAS on 0880 183 0023

FOR REFERRAL TO CHILDREN’S SOCIAL CARE
Starting Point (in Derbyshire) 01629 533190
Initial Response Team (in Derby City) 01332 641172, out of hours 01332 956606
Pathway for the management of genital herpes simplex in children and young people

Suspected Genital Herpes Simplex Infection

Children where there are concerns about sexual abuse and/or exploitation

- Refer to acute paediatric service (See above for contact details)
- Undertake Paediatric Assessment including:
  - History of cold sores in the family
  - Screen for other sexually transmitted infections
  - Confirm diagnosis and liaise with ISHS as appropriate

- Instigate treatment as appropriate (Seek advice from ISHS if required, including discussion as to whether it would be appropriate to advise parents to seek screening)

Over 13 year of age and no concerns about sexual abuse or exploitation

- Refer to Integrated Sexual Health Services (ISHS)
- Any concern about sexual abuse or exploitation?
  - Refer to children social care with concern about possible sexual abuse (See above for contact details)
  - Strategy meeting/discussion to include EMCYPSAS to agree timing of medical

- CSC/Police refer to CSA medical in 6 weeks time (See above for referral details)

Version control - Policy to be read in conjunction with the Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Procedures

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