

CME MCQ – 25

Prevention of Ulcerative Lesions by Episodic Treatment of Recurrent Herpes Labialis

The following questions are based on the Review article in *Acta Derm Venereol* 2010; 90: 122–130 by Johan Harmenberg et al.: Prevention of Ulcerative Lesions by Episodic Treatment of Recurrent Herpes Labialis. A: A Literature Review.

Recurrent herpes labialis is a common infection that affects one-third of the population in the Western world. There are substantial difficulties involved in carrying out clinical studies of recurrent herpes labialis, since the disease has a rapid onset, short-lasting viral shedding period and is rapidly self-healing.

1. Herpes labialis is common and many sufferers have frequent recurrences.
Each of the following statements regarding herpes labialis is true *except*:
 - A. Most patients are infected early in life
 - B. The incidence of infection increases steadily with age, reaching 80–90% among those 50 years or older
 - C. Among the total adult population, 30–45% report a history of symptomatic herpes labialis
 - D. A study in Sweden with 3,597 respondents suggests that the lifetime experience of symptomatic herpes labialis approaches 40%
 - E. It has been reported that 60% of a population 10 years of age and older will have ongoing herpes labialis at any one time.
2. Since the viral multiplication is also short-lasting, potent antiviral drugs, such as acyclovir and penciclovir (and their prodrugs valaciclovir and famciclovir), show only a limited reduction in the lesions' healing. Indicate the estimated reduction time:
 - A. 5%
 - B. 10%
 - C. 15%
 - D. 25%
 - E. 50%
3. Combinations of anti-viral therapy and other potential treatments listed below could provide added benefit in the treatment of HSV. Indicate combinations that have been favourable in human trials or in the mouse-ear model of recurrent HSV:
 - A. Acyclovir and potent steroids
 - B. Acyclovir and hydrocortisone
 - C. Famciclovir and prednisolone
 - D. Acyclovir and azathioprine
 - E. Valaciclovir and UVB

Recommended answers
1. E: It has been reported that 1.1% of a population 10 years of age and older will have ongoing herpes labialis at any one time.
2. B
3. B