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Valacyclovir to Reduce Transmission of Genital Herpes Simplex Virus Infection

To the Editor—In the herpes simplex virus (HSV) transmission study [1] referenced in the article by Mertz [2], the rate of transmission from HSV-seropositive women to susceptible men taking placebo for 8 months was 1.8%, versus 1.2% for susceptible men taking active drug for the same period. Is it cost effective or even medically warranted to prescribe daily valacyclovir for this degree of benefit? The benefit was clearly more evident for susceptible females, but my impression is that men are less apt to take daily medication for suppression of genital HSV infection and perhaps even less inclined to take it to diminish transmission.

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