

# Letterkenny University Hospital - LUH Antimicrobial Prescribing Policy/Guidelines: Viral

## Viral

Treatment of Viral Infections		
Infection	Treatment	Comment
Herpes simplex - Cold sores	Aciclovir 5% cream every 4 hours (5 times daily) for 5 to 10 days, starting at onset of symptoms	Most effective when applied at the earliest possible stage - at prodromal stage before vesicles appear.  Systemic treatment is necessary if frequent recurrences or for extensive infections.
Herpes simplex –  Including  Mouth/lips  and  Genital herpes	<b>Treatment:</b>  ValACiclovir PO 500mg every 12 hours (1g every 12 hours in immunocompromised)  Initial duration: Treat for 5 to 10 days (10 days duration in immunocompromised)  If Recurrent: Treat for 3 to 5 days (5 to 10 days in immunocompromised)  <b>Suppression:</b>  ValACiclovir PO 500mg every 24 hours (500mg every 12 hours in immunocompromised), therapy to be interrupted every 6 to 12 months to reassess recurrence frequency.	If IV treatment needed  e.g. herpes simplex in immunocompromised, severe genital herpes or prophylaxis in immunocompromised:  Aciclovir IV 5mg/kg every 8 hours.  Higher dose may be required in severe infection/immunocompromised. Discuss with Microbiology.
Herpes zoster (shingles)	ValACiclovir PO 1g every 8 hours for 7 days (in immunocompromised continue for 2 days after crusting of lesions)	If IV treatment needed:  Aciclovir IV 5mg/kg every 8 hours (10mg/kg every 8 hours in immunocompromised).  If disease is severe i.e. ocular, neurologic, disseminated disease or immunocompromised discuss with Microbiology.
Herpes simplex encephalitis	See <a href="#">Herpes Simplex Encephalitis Section</a>	

### References:

1. British Association of Sexual Health and HIV UK national guideline for the management of anogenital herpes, 2024 [Accessed March 2026]
2. The Sanford Guide to Antimicrobial Therapy Digital Update Feb 2018
3. HSE Antibiotic prescribing Genital Herpes [Accessed January 2025]
4. BNF Valaciclovir <https://doi.org/10.18578/BNF.947433078> [Last Update: 23-Sep-2022]