

## Herpes, Shingles and Arginine

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Herpes is a virus and a family of viruses. HSV, or herpes simplex virus, is the virus responsible for “herpes labialis” (fever blisters, cold sores, canker sores on lips) and “genital herpes”. These viruses continue to live in the body of people infected for as long as the person lives. The immune system keeps the virus “locked up” so it won’t cause problems. But the virus “re-activates” or causes blisters, lesions and symptoms, whenever the virus gets an advantage.

Another herpes virus is chicken pox. When it reactivates, it is called herpes zoster, or “shingles”.

What could give the herpes virus an advantage?

- An important advantage would be an **imbalance between Arginine and Lysine** in the body. Arginine and Lysine are amino acids which are present in our foods in different amounts. Arginine is necessary for the virus to grow and cause trouble. The way to fight this is to take extra Lysine. Studies have shown that 500 mg to 1,000 mg of lysine three times daily can help shorten the length of a herpes outbreak. Since herpes is quite common (almost 1 out of 5 people over the age of 12—and 90% of them don’t know they have it), you might expect this to be a big problem for almost anyone taking Arginine. In fact, it is quite rare that people seem to notice more outbreaks. For that reason, most people choose to simply take an Arginine supplement; then if they have trouble, take extra Lysine. For people who have frequent outbreaks, taking Lysine on a regular basis may help to prevent outbreaks.
- The same information applies to people with shingles. If you have EVER had chicken pox, you may one day develop shingles. The key is keeping the virus at a disadvantage. Keeping the Arginine and Lysine in balance will help keep the virus at bay.

- **Stress** will cause the immune system to be less effective, and the virus could cause symptoms.
- Other advantages could be caused by **excess sugar** in the diet. This was discovered when people with chronic yeast infections started on a low carbohydrate diet. The people noticed that herpes outbreaks diminished or went away entirely.
- **Low vitamin C** also gives the virus an advantage. Supplementing with vitamin C can boost the immune system's ability to control an outbreak.
- People who have had severe forms of herpes such as herpes encephalopathy (brain herpes) or ocular herpes (eye herpes) probably should avoid Arginine supplements. Never heard of it? Then you haven't had it. This kind of herpes is rare and requires hospitalization to treat it.

## References:

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