

# News from **The SHaC**

*divine divas*  
*drag show*  
*june 2*  
see page 4 for details

## The Low-Down on **Genital Herpes** - Part 2 - **Living With the Disease**

By Carol Rock

*There has been a lot of new information in the past few years regarding Genital Herpes, making it a serious concern for not only health educators and health practitioners, but the general public as well. There was also been a lot of people inquiring about Herpes this Fall. Hence, this article. This is the second of a 2-part series regarding Genital Herpes.*

### Inside this issue:

|   |   |
|---|---|
| Genital Herpes: Part 2                  | 1 |
| FUNdraisers                             | 4 |
| Snipples...                             | 5 |
| New on the Shelf                        | 6 |
| Special Thanks                          | 6 |
| SRH Days                                | 6 |
| International Day<br>Against Homophobia | 7 |
| Donate Now                              | 8 |

### What is it?

Genital Herpes is a virus that causes painful blisters and sores on and around the genital area. Herpes is caused by the Herpes Simplex Virus of which there are two strains: HSV1 and HSV2. HSV1 and HSV2 are also the viruses that cause the common cold sore. After your first outbreak of blisters, the virus goes dormant, or inactive.



### I've Got It. Now What?

Living with Herpes gets easier. Partly because it is not a physically debilitating disease. Rather, it is more annoying than anything else.

The first outbreak is usually the worst. It can be comforting to know that for most, outbreaks get shorter and less frequent with time. Recurrences decrease slightly in the first 5 years, and noticeably decrease after 5 years.

Socially, and emotionally, everyone reacts differently. There is a stigma about Herpes in our society, so some people with it never get over feeling embarrassed or ashamed, but for others, those feelings will decrease with

*Continued on page 2*

**wayves**  
Available at  
our office!

## **The Low-Down on Genital Herpes**

time as well.

### **Telling Your Partners**

People with Genital Herpes also have a responsibility to their sex partners about their infection. This can be difficult, but the more details you know about the disease and the better you plan how and what to say, the less worried they will likely be.

**“Up to 70% of Herpes cases are transmitted when there are no symptoms.”**

When you think it is time to discuss having sex, pick a private location and a time when you are both relaxed and in a good mood. You can't predict the outcome of your conversation; your partner may need time to think about what has just been said, or they may want detailed information. They may react poorly or they may react well.

### **What Causes Recurrent Outbreaks?**

No one knows what triggers the virus to become active again, but we do know that there are certain risk factors that may cause another outbreak. They are: Stress, Illness, Steroids, Fatigue, Menstruation, Pregnancy, Sun exposure, Certain Foods (e.g.. Alcohol, caffeine, peanuts, etc), Poor Diet, Friction in Area.

Eating properly, getting enough sleep, avoiding stress or finding a good way for you to relieve stress, and generally taking good care of yourself is key in reducing your outbreaks.

### **How is Genital Herpes Treated?**

There is no cure for Herpes, but it can be treated to help reduce the symptoms. There are anti-viral creams and lotions which may help reduce the severity of your outbreaks. Your doctor may prescribe a cream to soothe the area as well.

Acyclovir and variations (like Zovirax, Famvir and Valtrex) are newer anti-viral drugs that may reduce the length of your outbreaks, help reduce pain, and reduce the risk of spreading the disease to your

partner(s). Ask your doctor if they are right for you.

### **Is There Anything Else I Can Do?**

Yes. Here are some tips from specialists and from people who have been living with Herpes for a while:

- Keep the area clean
- Never touch your blisters and sores. If you have to (e.g. to put on a treatment cream) avoid touching your eyes, nose, lips, inside of your mouth, and genitals afterward. You could pass the disease to another part of your body (“autoinnoculation”) and these areas are the most vulnerable.
- If you do touch the sores, wash immediately with warm soapy water.
- Do not share towels. Although the virus is believed to be fragile, it is unknown how long it might survive if kept in optimal conditions (warm, damp, dark)

**Herpes (HSV2) is probably the most common STI in North America. 1 in 5 people have HSV2. There are others who have HSV1 Genital Herpes, making the statistic more like 1 in 4!\***

## The Low-Down on Genital Herpes

- Wear cotton underwear rather than synthetic (e.g. polyester, nylon, etc)
- Avoid pantyhose and tights.
- Wear looser fitting clothes.
- Keep the affected area clean and dry
- Bathe quickly
- Try use a hair dryer instead of a towel to dry around the sores.
- After urinating, wash your genital area with cool water.
- If it hurts when you urinate, you can try pouring warm water while urinating, to dilute the urine and make it sting less. This won't help guys much though, if they have sores inside the penis.
- You can also have a bath and urinate in the tub just before you are ready to get out.
- Some people find that wet tea bags on the sores provide some relief.

**9 of every 10 people who tested positive for HSV2 were not aware that they had it.**

**3 of those 9 had no symptoms at all.**

**6 of the 9 did have symptoms but attributed them to something else.\***

### How Can I Avoid Spreading It?

You can't actually prevent Genital Herpes from being spread *for sure*, but you can do things to greatly reduce the risk of spreading it.

- Wear protection (condom or an oral dam) whenever you are sexually intimate. The virus can be passed even when you are not having an outbreak. This is called asymptomatic shedding. It means passing or shedding the virus while having no symptoms. Condoms are not 100% effective because the virus can be somewhere in the genital area that is not protected by a condom.
- Reduce your number of partners.
- Never have sex during an outbreak, or if you think an outbreak is about to start.
- Never give oral sex if you have cold sores on your mouth.
- Avoid combining drugs and alcohol with sex. They reduce your ability to make responsible decisions.
- Antiviral therapy

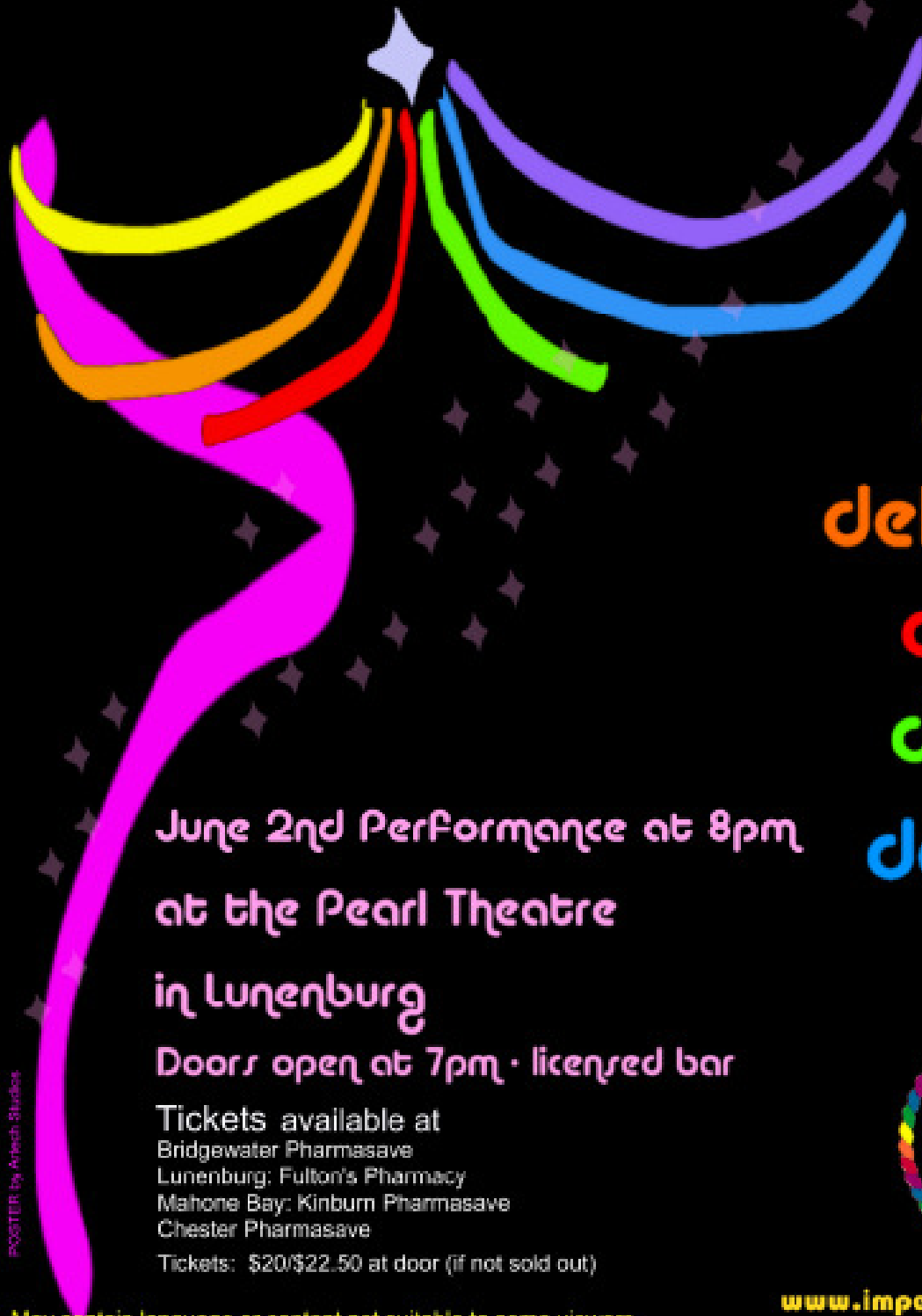
*\*Stats are from the U.S. Source: Web conference: HSV-2 and Asymptomatic Viral Shedding: Prevention and Management for Healthcare Providers ([www.medscape.com](http://www.medscape.com))*

In the last issue we explored the new information on Genital Herpes. If you missed that, check our website at [www.lunco.cfsh.info](http://www.lunco.cfsh.info) for the back issues.

# divine ✦ divas

Featuring the best female impersonators in Atlantic Canada

Pearl Theatre 634-1987  
Proceeds for the Sexual Health Centre 527-2868  
Formerly Planned Parenthood



divine  
delicious  
debut  
daring  
delight  
drag

June 2nd Performance at 8pm  
at the Pearl Theatre

in Lunenburg

Doors open at 7pm · licensed bar

Tickets available at

Bridgewater Pharmasave  
Lunenburg: Fulton's Pharmacy  
Mahone Bay: Kinburn Pharmasave  
Chester Pharmasave

Tickets: \$20/\$22.50 at door (if not sold out)



POSTER by Artech Studios

May contain language or content not suitable to some viewers

[www.imperialcourtnr.com](http://www.imperialcourtnr.com)



Special thanks to:

**Ronnie** at **Artech Studios** for poster design, **Lighthouse Publishing** for printing the poster, and **CKBW** for the radio ads.

# SNIPPLES...

## "PRONTO" CONDOMS

There are some nifty new 'mess-free' condoms being produced and promoted in South Africa, where AIDS awareness is high because of the extremely high incidence of AIDS. The trick is with how the condom is opened—it's easy to open by 'cracking' the package open and you don't get your hands sticky because you don't have to touch the condom!



To see the Website and Demo:

[www.prontocondoms.co.za](http://www.prontocondoms.co.za)

To see the Ads:

[www.prontocondoms.co.za/adverts.htm](http://www.prontocondoms.co.za/adverts.htm)

## Anti-Choice Zealot Convicted

Anti-abortion extremist James Kopp was convicted Jan. 25/07 of violating the U.S. Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act by shooting and killing an abortion provider in 1998. A U.S. district court jury deliberated about four hours before returning the verdict following a two-week trial. Kopp, 52, already serving a 25-year-to-life sentence on a state murder conviction for Dr. Barnett Slepian's death, was found guilty in federal court of targeting and killing Slepian because he provided abortions.

Kopp is also suspected of murdering other doctors in the U.S. and Canada.

Source: Chronicle Herald, January 26/07

## Male Version of I.U.D.

Dr. Neil Pollock, a Canadian doctor has created a set of silicon plugs inserted in the Vas Deferens to block the flow of sperm. The new device will be called the I.V.D. It will be more easily reversible than a Vasectomy, where a portion of the Vas is removed. He hopes to have the device on the market in 3—5 years.

For the full story, go to <http://www.vancourier.com/issues06/113206/news/113206nn9.html>



One of our Board member's daughters went to Africa and took this picture of a billboard. It is a common thing to see HIV/AIDS awareness advertisements there.

Source: Chronicle Herald April 27/07

## Go Mike! Sports Writer Reveals He's Transsexual

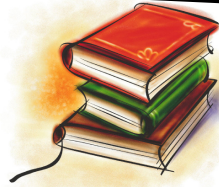
A veteran sports writer for the Los Angeles Times said in his column Thursday that he is a transsexual. Mike Penner told readers of his struggle to embrace his gender, and said when he returns from vacation in a few weeks he will be known as Christine Daniels. He did not say whether he was having surgery or why he's changing his last name.

"I am a transsexual sports writer," Penner wrote. "It has taken more than 40 years, a million tears and hundreds of hours of soul-wrenching therapy for me to work up toe courage to type those words." The 49-year-old Penner said his brain has been "wired female" and he's tried to fight of the urge to change sexes. He called writing a story about his sexuality the "most frightening fear I somehow had to confront and struggle to scale. "How do you go about sharing your most important truth, one you spent a lifetime trying to keep deeply buried, to a world that has grown familiar and comfortable with your façade?" Penner asked.

Penner, who is married to another Los Angeles Times writer, said he started coming out about two months ago by telling his boss, his barber and a soccer teammate, and that he now feels happier and healthier.

"Mike Penner has been an exemplary contributor to the Los Angeles Times sports pages for over two decades and today's column is no exception," Randy Harvey, the newspaper's sports editor, said in a statement. Penner has spent more than 20 years at the Los Angeles Times and has covered the Olympics, the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim and has served as the Times' sports media critic.

# New on the Shelf



Becoming an Askable Parent: How to Talk with Your Child about Sexuality , America Social Health Association, 2006

Managing Herpes: How to live and Love with a chronic STD. Charles Ebel and Anna Walk, MD , MPH. Herpes Resource Centre of the America Social Health Association. 2002.

Reality Check: A Close Look at Accessing Abortion Services in Canadian Hospitals. Jessica Shaw, 2006.



## Special Thanks to

Volunteers **Dr. Peacock** and **Dr. Maidment** of our Medical Advisory Board.

\* Dr. Peacock has moved from the area and we are looking for additional members.

All the doctors who support us by taking one time referrals for Paps, STI tests, abortion referrals, birth control, and GLBT issues, for our clients who don't have a doctor.

Volunteer **Jennifer H.** who has collected and copied several of the "Snipples" stories for this and other newsletters.

Our neighbour, **Fancy's Hair Shop** for collecting our large mail and packages when the office is closed.

Our Board of Directors who volunteer a few hours a month to attend meetings and ensure our organization runs to the best of its ability.

Volunteer **Chris S.** who has been coming in weekly for years to help with Administrative duties.

Our landlord at **Hillcrest Corner** for providing internet service.

### SRH-Related Special Days ...

- April 7 — World Health Day
- May — Hepatitis Awareness month
- May 5 — International Day of the Midwife
- May 17 — International Day Against Homophobia (see page 7)
- June — Senior's Month
- June 3 — National Cancer Survivor's Day
- July 11 — World Population Day
- August 1 — 7 World Breastfeeding Week
- August 12 — International Youth Day

**SPRING 2007**

## What is Homophobia?

Homophobia is a negative attitude or feeling; an aversion towards gays and lesbians or towards homosexuality in general. It is also the rejection of people considered gay or lesbian and of all things associated with them, for example, gender non-conformity. The following are variants of homophobia:

- **Bi-phobia:** aversion towards bisexual people or bisexuality
- **Gayphobia:** aversion towards gay men or male homosexuality
- **Lesbophobia:** aversion towards lesbian women or female homosexuality

## Heterosexism

Heterosexism is the belief or assumption that everyone is heterosexual and that heterosexuality is the only acceptable way of being. This belief, which relies on the idea that the majority rules and is therefore normal, is often the source of homophobia.

## How Can You Participate?

- **Parents:** Let your children know that from now on slurs such as “fag(got)”, “dike”, “homo”, “that’s so gay”, and any other derogatory remarks toward gays and lesbians will no longer be tolerated at home and that they will have to eliminate these words once and for all from their vocabulary out of respect for gays and lesbians and their immediate families.
- **Students:** Form a Gay-Straight Alliance (GSA) at your school.
- **Libraries:** Clearly display books on homophobia.
- **Employers:** Set up programs against homophobia in the workplace; organize awareness activities
- **Community groups:** Heighten awareness amongst your staff and your clients.
- **Newspapers:** Publish reports and in-depth articles on the subject.
- **Radio Stations:** Call upon artists and personalities to speak on the subject; play songs about tolerance.
- **Internet Diffusers:** Take out or refuse any homophobic content.
- **Legislators, governments, municipalities and school boards:** Approve a motion in support of the *International Day Against Homophobia*, and to make a commitment to fight homophobia.
- **The general public:** Make a symbolic gesture

Let us know what you did! Big or small. Email [LunCo@NSSexualHealth.ca](mailto:LunCo@NSSexualHealth.ca) and tell us what you did to help combat homophobia!

**International Day  
Against  
HOMOPHOBIA**

**May 17, 2007**



SEXUAL ORIENTATION IS NOT A CHOICE

INTERNATIONAL DAY AGAINST HOMOPHOBIA  
MAY 17



**SEXUAL  
HEALTH CENTRE**

The experts in sexual and  
reproductive health

LUNENBURG COUNTY

**Executive Director: Carol Rock**

4 Hillcrest Street, Unit 8  
Bridgewater, NS  
B4V 1S9

**Phone:** 527-2868

**E-mail:** lunco@nssexualhealth.ca

**Web:** www.lunco.cfsh.info

### Please Note:

The Centre will be **closed** for the Summer  
from June 25 to September 14.

However, we will have a trained volunteer  
coming in approximately 1 morning a week  
to do pregnancy testing and answer your  
questions. Days when the centre will be  
open in the summer will be left on the an-  
swering machine.

### Spring Hours until then:

Mon–Fri 9–3, by chance or by appointment.



For easy donations any time of the day or  
year, go to

[www.canadahelps.org](http://www.canadahelps.org)

Press **"I am a donor"**

Enter our name in the search area.

Follow the links and fill in your amount.

We will be notified by CanadaHelps  
when you are done and they will  
send your tax receipt!

#### You can donate...

- for yourself
- in memory of someone
- In honour of someone!

#### You can ...

- Make a one time donation
- Set up monthly donations

**Or, mail or drop off a donation to  
our office. Include your name and  
mailing information and we will  
mail your receipt to you!**

**Sexual Health Centre  
4 Hillcrest Street, Unit 8  
Bridgewater, NS B4V 1SA9**



**Happy Spring**  
**from everyone at the**  
**SEXUAL HEALTH CENTRE**

To let us know what you think about the Newsletter, or to submit an idea or trivia for "Snipples",  
call Carol at 527-2868.