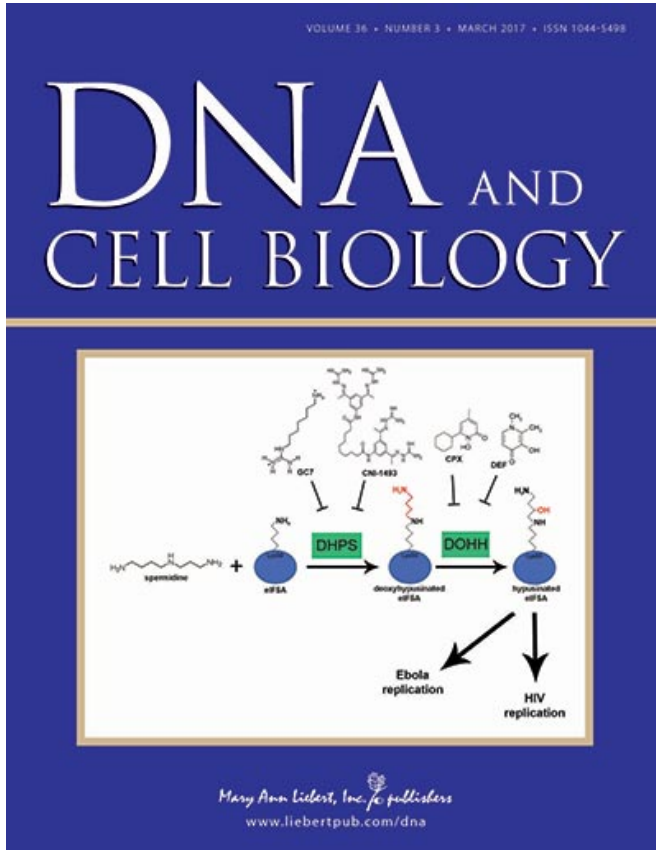


Why is herpes simplex virus disease risk so much greater for newborns?

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Credit: Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., publishers

Interferon is a crucial component of the human immune system's response to infection by herpes simplex virus type 1 (HSV-1), but how important a role it plays in determining the severity of disease and explaining why newborns are so much more susceptible to HSV-1 infection than adults remains unclear. A comprehensive review of the contribution of type I interferon (IFN) to controlling HSV-1 infection is presented in an article published in *DNA and Cell Biology*.

In the article entitled "The Type I Interferon Response and Age-Dependent Susceptibility to

Herpes Simplex Virus Infection," Daniel Giraldo, Douglas Wilcox, and Richard Longnecker, Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, Chicago, IL, provide an in-depth look at the IFN response to HSV-1 infection. The authors examine the factors that may explain why newborns infected with HSV-1 are at greater risk for serious and potentially life-threatening diseases such as herpes simplex encephalitis, whereas in adults orolabial lesions are the more likely result of HSV-1 infection.

"HSV is ubiquitous and approximately 70% of the population is infected with this virus. It may maintain a life-long relationship with the host establishing latency and reappearing upon stress. This study is important because it gives us insight into the differences between [infection](#) of young hosts and older individuals," says Carol Shoshkes Reiss, PhD, Editor-in-Chief, of *DNA and Cell Biology* and Professor, Departments of Biology and Neural Science, and Global Public Health at New York University, NY.

More information: Daniel Giraldo et al, The Type I Interferon Response and Age-Dependent Susceptibility to Herpes Simplex Virus Infection, *DNA and Cell Biology* (2017). [DOI: 10.1089/dna.2017.3668](https://doi.org/10.1089/dna.2017.3668)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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