October issue of *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* highlights:
More than 500 million people have genital herpes virus

**GENEVA** – More than 500 million people are infected worldwide with the virus that causes genital herpes and more than 20 million people become newly infected each year, according to a study published today in the international public health journal, the *Bulletin of the World Health Organization*.

*Herpes simplex virus type 2* is commonly spread through sexual contact and leads to lifelong infection. While painful genital ulcerations are the classical symptom, most people have mild symptoms and don't know that they are infected. These persons can thus unknowingly infect others.

“Serious consequences include an increased risk of acquiring, and likely transmitting, HIV, and transmission from infected mothers to their babies during birth, which can cause brain damage and death,” says Dr George Schmid, Department of HIV/AIDS at the World Health Organization.

This first-ever estimate of the global burden found that roughly 16% of the world's population in the 15-49 year-old age group were infected, with considerable geographic variation. Women are more commonly infected than men, with the highest prevalence in sub-Saharan Africa where up to 70% of women are infected.

The *Bulletin of the World Health Organization* is an international journal of public health with a special focus on developing countries. It is one of the world’s leading public health journals and the flagship periodical of the World Health Organization.

Read the study here: [http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/07-046128/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/07-046128/en/index.html)

Other key articles this month can be found at: [http://www.who.int/bulletin/en/](http://www.who.int/bulletin/en/)
• Exclusive interview with former WHO director-general, Dr Halfdan Mahler, on the 30th anniversary of the launch of primary health care and a separate report on its origins.  
http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/08-041008/en/index.html

• Investigation into outbreak of severe kidney failure caused by contaminated cough syrup in Panama.  
http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/07-049965/en/index.html

• Call for broader access to surgical solutions for morbidly obese people in Chile.  
http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/07-048785/en/index.html

• Indian study shows that home visits save babies in days following birth.  
http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/07-042226/en/index.html

• Serious lack of mental health services for adolescents in Mexico City.  
http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/07-047696/en/index.html

• Mass treatment of schoolchildren aims to reduce the 200 million people infected with schistosomiasis, a water-borne parasitic disease that is prevalent in 74 countries.  
http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/08-058669/en/index.html

The Bulletin's table of contents can be found at:  
http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/86/10/en/index.html

For further information please contact:

Fiona Fleck  
News Editor  
Bulletin of the World Health Organization  
T: +41 22 791 1897  
M: +41 78 678 9079  
fleckf@who.int

Dr George Schmid  
Medical Officer  
Department HIV/AIDS  
World Health Organization  
T: +41 22 791 1227  
schmidg@who.int

Sarah Cumberland  
Technical Officer  
Bulletin of the World Health Organization  
T: +41 22 791 32 64  
M: +33 (0)6 31 66 60 32  
cumberlands@who.int

Dr Francis Ndowa  
Medical Officer  
Reproductive Health Research  
World Health Organization  
T: +41 22 791 4575  
ndowaf@who.int