

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Syphilis

1. What is syphilis?

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by bacteria (germs). Syphilis is easy to cure. Without treatment, it can hurt your body's organs. Congenital syphilis is when a pregnant woman passes syphilis to her baby during pregnancy or childbirth. It can cause a woman to have a baby too early or cause a miscarriage or stillbirth (a baby born dead). It can also lead to serious health problems in babies.

2. How is this disease spread?

You can get syphilis by having contact with a syphilis sore during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Sores can be found on the penis, vagina, anus, or on the lips and mouth. You may not see the sores and they don't always cause pain. Congenital syphilis spreads from mother to baby during pregnancy or birth.

3. What are the symptoms of this disease?

Often people don't notice symptoms, so they don't know they're infected. Signs of syphilis may include a sore near the area where the germ entered the body (vagina, anus, lips, or mouth) or rash on one or more areas of the body. The symptoms may appear and disappear. The only way to know for sure is to get tested.

4. When should I get tested?

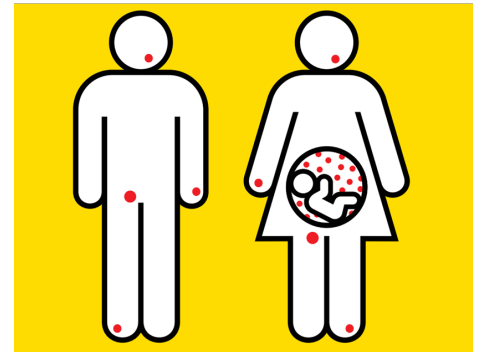
Test if you are experiencing symptoms. Test if you are getting tested for other STIs. If you are having sex without using a condom and/or have multiple sex partners, get tested every 6 months. If you are a man having sex with other men, get tested every 3-6 months. Test if you are a woman and plan to get pregnant. If you're pregnant, remind your doctor to test you three times: during your first trimester (1 – 12 weeks), third trimester (28 – 32 weeks), and at delivery.

5. How is this disease treated?

Syphilis can be treated and cured with antibiotics (medicine that kills germs). Make sure your sex partner(s) get tested and treated too. This will help them stay healthy, avoid infecting others, and avoid re-infecting you.

6. How can I prevent this disease?

- Use condoms.
- Go to your doctor for testing and treatment as early as possible. If you don't have a regular doctor call one of the local providers listed on here to get testing and treatment.



Key Points:

- Syphilis and other STIs are on the rise in Shasta County.
- Common symptoms of syphilis include a sore or rash, but many people don't see signs.
- Get tested for syphilis.
- Syphilis is treated and cured with antibiotics.

Local Health Providers:

Shasta County Public Health
(530) 225-5591

Women's Health Specialist
(530) 221-0194

Planned Parenthood
(530) 351-7100

Shasta Community Health Center
(530) 246-5710