



# Syphilis

## What is Syphilis?

- › Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) that is caused by a bacteria.

**Rates of infectious syphilis have gone up 178 % in the past ten years.**

## How is Syphilis spread?

- › Syphilis is spread when someone with the infection has condomless vaginal, anal and/or oral sex with someone else.

## Signs and symptoms

- › Sometimes painless, open sores can appear on or inside the penis, vagina, rectum or mouth.
- › Swollen glands in the groin, behind the ears, under the jaw and in the armpits.
- › A body rash and/or feeling like you have the flu.

**Many people won't have symptoms at the beginning of an infection, so it's important to get tested often if you are sexually active.**

### Get tested

- › Testing is quick and simple with a blood test and/or swab.
- › If you have experienced sexual violence, you should be tested for syphilis and other STI.
- › Talk to your doctor, nurse, sexual health clinic or local health unit about being tested for syphilis and other STI.

**The number of babies born with syphilis is increasing.**

### If you are pregnant

- › You should be tested for syphilis as early as possible.
- › If you have the infection, you can pass it on to your baby before it is born or when giving birth. Untreated syphilis can cause birth defects and stillbirth.
- › Treatment for syphilis is safe during pregnancy.

### Talk to your partner(s)

- › If you have syphilis, you should tell your sexual partner(s) so that they can be tested and treated.
- › If you are uncomfortable telling your partner(s), ask your doctor, nurse or local public health unit for help.
- › Talk to your partner(s) about STI and the use of protection, so you can make an informed decision about your sexual health.

### Getting treated

- › Syphilis can be cured with antibiotics.

**For more information, visit:**

**[www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/syphilis.html](http://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/syphilis.html)**

