

"Yaws is an infectious tropical disease caused by the spirochete (spiral shaped) bacterium known as *Treponema pertenue*. The disease presents in three stages of which the first and second are easily treated. The third, however, may involve complex changes to the bones in many parts of the body. The first stage is characterized by the appearance of small, painless bumps on the skin that group together and grow until they resemble a strawberry. The skin may break open, forming an ulcer. The second stage (usually starting several weeks or months after the first) presents with a crispy, crunchy rash that may cover arms, legs, buttocks and/or face. If the bottoms of the feet are involved, walking is painful and the stage is known as "crab yaws." Stage 3 yaws involves the long bones, joints, and/or skin. Yaws is very common in tropical areas of the world but it is not known in the United States. It is not a sexually transmitted disease. It occurs in children younger than 15 years of age. Yaws is an infectious disease caused by a spiral-shaped bacterium (spirochete) known as *Treponema pertenue*. Yaws is usually transmitted by direct contact with the infected skin sores of affected individuals. In some cases, yaws may be transmitted through the bite of an infected insect. The diagnosis of stage 1 and stage 2 yaws is made by microscopic examination of tissue samples (darkfield examination) from the skin lesions of affected individuals. Stage 3 yaws may be diagnosed by specialized blood tests (i.e., VDRL and treponemal antibodies)."