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Syphilis

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection [<https://medlineplus.gov/sexuallytransmittedinfections.html>] (STI) caused by bacteria. It infects the genital area, lips, mouth, or anus of both men and women. You usually get syphilis from sexual contact with someone who has it. It can also pass from mother to baby during pregnancy.

The early stage of syphilis usually causes a single, small, painless sore. Sometimes it causes swelling in nearby lymph nodes. If you do not treat it, syphilis usually causes a non-itchy skin rash, often on your hands and feet. Many people do not notice symptoms for years. Symptoms can go away and come back.

The sores caused by syphilis make it easier to get or give someone HIV [<https://medlineplus.gov/hiv.html>] during sex. If you are pregnant, syphilis can cause complications, or you could lose your baby. In rare cases, syphilis causes serious health problems and even death.

Syphilis is easy to cure with antibiotics if you catch it early. Correct usage of latex condoms greatly reduces, but does not completely eliminate, the risk of catching or spreading syphilis. If your or your partner is allergic to latex [<https://medlineplus.gov/latexallergy.html>], you can use polyurethane condoms. The most reliable way to avoid infection is to not have anal, vaginal, or oral sex.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Start Here

- About Syphilis [<https://www.cdc.gov/syphilis/about/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/syphilis/es/about/acerca-de-la-sifilis.html>]
- Syphilis [<https://familydoctor.org/condition/syphilis/?adfree=true>] (American Academy of Family Physicians)
Also in Spanish [<https://es.familydoctor.org/condicion/sifilis-es/?adfree=true>]
- Syphilis [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/syphilis/symptoms-causes/syc-20351756?p=1>] (Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research)
Also in Spanish [<https://www.mayoclinic.org/es/diseases-conditions/syphilis/symptoms-causes/syc-20351756?p=1>]

Diagnosis and Tests

- Syphilis Tests [<https://medlineplus.gov/lab-tests/syphilis-tests/>]  (National Library of Medicine)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/pruebas-de-laboratorio/pruebas-de-sifilis/>]

Related Issues

- Chlamydia, Gonorrhea, and Syphilis [<https://www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/chlamydia-gonorrhea-and-syphilis>] (American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists)
- Neurosyphilis [<https://www.ninds.nih.gov/health-information/disorders/neurosyphilis>]  (National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke)

Images

- Primary Syphilis [<https://skinsight.com/skin-conditions/primary-syphilis/?lmiw9cApl=1>] (VisualDX)

Statistics and Research

- Syphilis [<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/diseases-conditions/syphilis>]  (National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases)

Clinical Trials

- ClinicalTrials.gov: Syphilis [<https://clinicaltrials.gov/search?cond=%22Syphilis%22&aggFilters=status:not%20rec>]  (National Institutes of Health)

Journal Articles

References and abstracts from MEDLINE/PubMed (National Library of Medicine)

- Article: Prevalence and associated factors for HIV, HBV and syphilis coinfections among... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40748946>]
- Article: Global, regional, and national burden and trends of syphilis among women... [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40697850>]
- Article: Age-period-cohort analysis of syphilis epidemics in Eastern China, China, 2005-2024. [<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/40692887>]
- Syphilis -- see more articles [<https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=%22Syphilis%22%5Bmajr%3Anoexp%5D+AND+humans%5Bmh%5D+AND+english%5Bla%5D+AND+%22last+1+Year%22+%5Bdat%5D+NOT+%28letter%5Bpt%5D+OR+case+reports%5Bpt%5D+OR+editorial%5Bpt%5D+OR+comment%5Bpt%5D%29+AND+free+full+text%5Bsb%5D+>]

Find an Expert

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [<https://www.cdc.gov/>]
Also in Spanish [<https://www.cdc.gov/spanish/>]
- National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases [<https://www.niaid.nih.gov/>] 

Teenagers

- Syphilis [<https://kidshealth.org/en/teens/std-syphilis.html>] (Nemours Foundation)

Women

- Syphilis [<https://womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/syphilis>] (Department of Health and Human Services, Office on Women's Health)
Also in Spanish [<https://espanol.womenshealth.gov/a-z-topics/syphilis>]
- Syphilis in Pregnancy [<https://www.marchofdimes.org/find-support/topics/pregnancy/syphilis-pregnancy>] (March of Dimes Foundation)
Also in Spanish [<https://nacersano.marchofdimes.org/embarazo/la-sifilis-en-el-embarazo.aspx>]

Patient Handouts

- Condom Use: An Overview [<https://www.cdc.gov/condom-use/>] (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)
- Congenital syphilis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001344.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/001344.htm>]
- CSF-VDRL test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003623.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003623.htm>]
- FTA-ABS blood test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003512.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003512.htm>]

- Neurosyphilis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000703.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000703.htm>]
- RPR test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003533.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003533.htm>]
- Syphilis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000861.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/000861.htm>]
- VDRL test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003515.htm>] (Medical Encyclopedia)
Also in Spanish [<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/003515.htm>]



MEDICAL ENCYCLOPEDIA

- Congenital syphilis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001344.htm>]
- CSF-VDRL test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003623.htm>]
- FTA-ABS blood test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003512.htm>]
- General paresis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000748.htm>]
- Gumma [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000859.htm>]
- Interstitial keratitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/001609.htm>]
- Neurosyphilis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000703.htm>]
- RPR test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003533.htm>]
- Syphilis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000861.htm>]
- Syphilitic aseptic meningitis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000724.htm>]
- Tabes dorsalis [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/000729.htm>]
- VDRL test [<https://medlineplus.gov/ency/article/003515.htm>]

Related Health Topics

- Sexually Transmitted Infections [<https://medlineplus.gov/sexuallytransmittedinfections.html>]

National Institutes of Health

The primary NIH organization for research on *Syphilis* is the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases [<http://www.niaid.nih.gov/>]

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