

Syphilis

What you need to know



Did you know?

- Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection that can cause serious health problems without treatment.
- Syphilis is spreading faster in Montana than it has in decades.
- The good news is that you can prevent, treat, and cure syphilis.

How do I know if I have syphilis?

- You can have syphilis and not know it. Many people with syphilis do not have any symptoms. Syphilis symptoms may be very mild, or be similar to signs of other health problems. The only way to know for sure if you have syphilis is to get tested.

I am pregnant, what do I need to know?

- If you are pregnant and have syphilis, you can give the infection to your unborn baby.
- Syphilis testing is the only way to know if you have syphilis and the first step to preventing more serious health problems for you, your partner, or your baby if you are pregnant.
- Undetected syphilis infection during pregnancy can cause your baby to be born too early, can cause birth defects, or cause your baby to be stillborn.
- To protect your baby, you should get tested and seek treatment right away if you test positive.

How can I get help?



If you need help getting to a clinic for testing or treatment, please contact your local public health department.

How is it spread?

- Any sexually active person can get syphilis.
- Syphilis can be transmitted during vaginal, anal sex and oral sex.
- Syphilis is passed from person to person through direct contact with a syphilis sore.

What if I test positive for syphilis?

- If you test positive for syphilis, get treatment and protect yourself and others.
- It is very important that your partner(s) is also treated to avoid getting syphilis again.

How can I protect myself from syphilis?

- You can reduce your risk of getting syphilis by avoiding unprotected sex (sex without a condom).
- Some ways to protect yourself include only having sex with a person who has been tested for syphilis and other STIs and by using latex condoms **the right way** every time you have sex.



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