

## Syphilis

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### What is Syphilis?

Syphilis is a bacterial infection caused by *Treponema pallidum*

There are four stages of syphilis – primary, secondary, latent, and tertiary. Syphilis is a series disease that can lead to death if left untreated

### Signs and Symptoms

Primary Syphilis:

- Chancre – ulcer that forms were a person was exposed
- The ulcer can appear within 10 days to 3 months after exposure

Secondary Syphilis:

- Skin rash
- Mild fever
- Fatigue
- Sore throat
- Patchy hair loss

Latent Syphilis: no symptoms

Tertiary Syphilis

- Damage to the heart, eyes, liver, brain, bones and joints

### Transmission (How it spreads)

Sexual contact – oral, anal, and vaginal sex

Mother-to-infant at birth

### Diagnosis and Treatment

Testing of fluid from sores

Blood tests and examination of spinal fluid

Penicillin is used to treat syphilis, the amount and length of time depends on how long someone has been infected

### Prevention:

Practicing safe sex

### Who is at Risk?

Anyone who is sexually active

All pregnant women should be tested for syphilis

Men who have sex with men are at an increased risk

Those who have HIV

Those whose partners have tested positive for syphilis

If you have symptoms, call your healthcare provider

Report cases to the Riley County Health Department by calling the Disease Investigation  
Line: 785-317-0474

Syphilis is a reportable disease in the state of Kansas. All cases must be reported to KDHE  
via the Epi Hotline: 877-427-7317