



# Syphilis

## Background Information:

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) caused by a bacteria. It is characterized in stages and can cause serious complications.

## Syphilis Symptoms:

Syphilis symptoms vary depending on the stage, but some symptoms include: a painless sore around your genital region, mouth or anal area, a rash on your hands, feet or torso, or more serious complications if left untreated.

## Treatment:

Syphilis can be treated with penicillin, or an alternate medications if you have an allergy to penicillin.

## Who is at risk?:

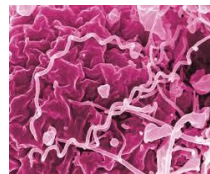
- Anyone engaging in any kind of sexual intercourse including vaginal, oral or anal sex
- Men who have sex with men (MSM)
- People with multiple sex partner
- People who do not use condoms during sex
- People who exchange sex for drugs or money
- HIV positive individuals
- IV drug users
- Pregnant women

## Recommendations:

**Individuals Can-** Limit your risks. Use condoms every time you have sex, limit your number of sex partners, abstain from sex. Get tested. Once per year, if you are in a high risk group it might be necessary to get tested more often. You should discuss screening with your doctor.

**Providers Can-** Offer your patients regular syphilis screenings if they are in high risk groups.

**Parents Can-** Discuss safe sexual practices with their children.



## Definitions:

### Primary Syphilis:

Characterized by a painless sore at the site of infection which lasts for 1-5 weeks. You can spread syphilis to others through contact with this sore.

### Secondary Syphilis:

Often includes a rash on the palms of the hands, feet, or torso can occur several months after the sore and lasts for 1-3 months.

### Early Latent Syphilis:

A syphilis infection of less than one year, usually has no symptoms.

### Late Latent Syphilis:

A syphilis infection of more than one year, usually has no symptoms.

### Tertiary Syphilis:

Does not occur often in the United States. May include complications such as gummas (small tumors which can grow anywhere in the body).

### Congenital Syphilis:

Pregnant women can pass syphilis to their unborn babies. This can result in stillbirth and birth defects.

### Neuro-Syphilis:

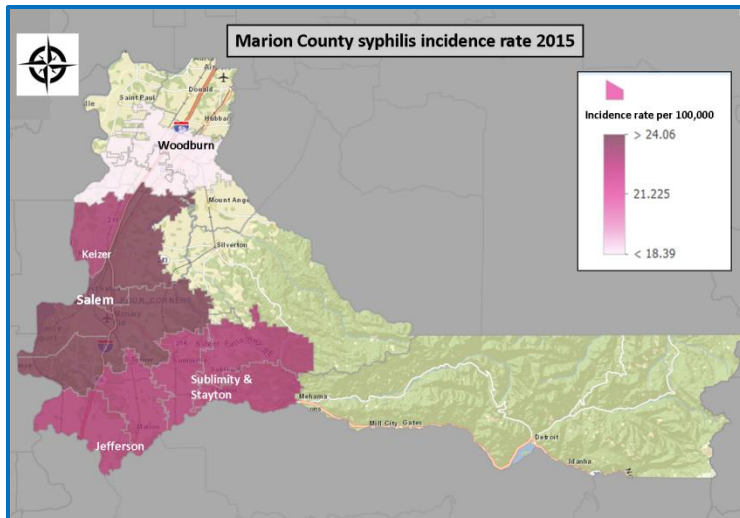
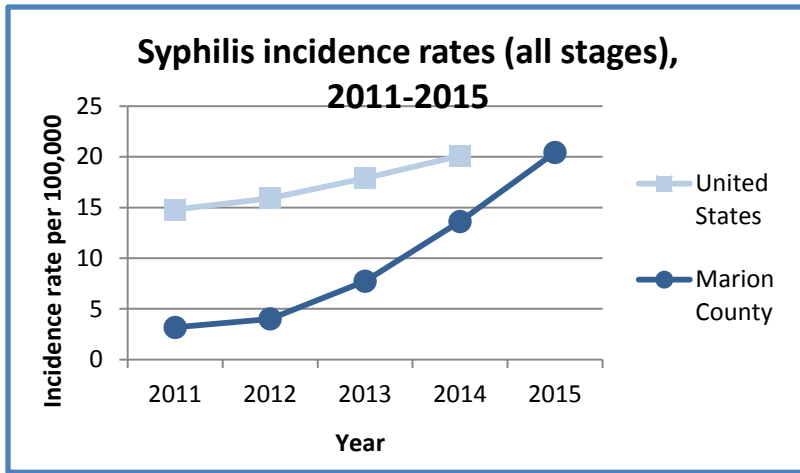
A serious complication that can occur during any of the stages above can affect the eyes, the hearing, the brain, and other parts of the nervous system



## Syphilis in Marion County:

In the past 5 years Marion County has seen a 490.6% increase in the incidence of syphilis. Marion County has surpassed both Oregon State and United States for all stages of syphilis rates in 2014. In alignment with national trends Marion County is also seeing an increase in rates of congenital syphilis. Males account for 82% of Marion County Syphilis cases.

## Syphilis incidence rate 2011-2015,



## Resources/ Contact Info:

If you would like further information about the Marion County Public Health Division STI services please visit our website: <http://www.co.marion.or.us/HLT/PH/Pages/sti.aspx>

If you would like to reach the Marion County Public Health Department during office hours, please call: 503-588-5342

If you need to report a communicable disease or public health emergency please call: 503-588-5621

Please like us on Facebook and follow us on Twitter for the most updated information about important events in our county.

## What is Marion County Public Health Doing?:

Each time a medical provider suspects or confirms that an individual has syphilis, the case must be reported to the Marion County Public Health Division communicable disease (CD) team. The CD team follows up with the individual to ensure he/she receives treatment and finds, tests, and treats (or refers for testing or treatment) all of the people who may have had sexual contact with that individual. In Oregon, there is a law that says that every syphilis case must be reported to the local public health department within one business day. To make sure the providers in our county know the reporting requirements, our public health division staff are available to meet with community partners and healthcare providers.