

PROTECT YOURSELF AGAINST SYPHILIS



Syphilis is a highly contagious sexually transmitted infection that can cause serious health problems if not treated. Syphilis is on the rise in South Carolina in many high-risk groups. DHEC is working to prevent the spread of syphilis.

How do people get syphilis?

You can get infected with syphilis by having unprotected sex or through direct contact with a syphilis sore or rash. Syphilis can be spread during vaginal, anal, or oral sex.

Symptoms include sores at the original infection site (genitals, anus or mouth). If untreated, syphilis can cause fever, swollen glands, or a rash anywhere on the body within weeks. Long-term health effects may damage the heart, brain, eyes, or nervous system.

Who is at risk?

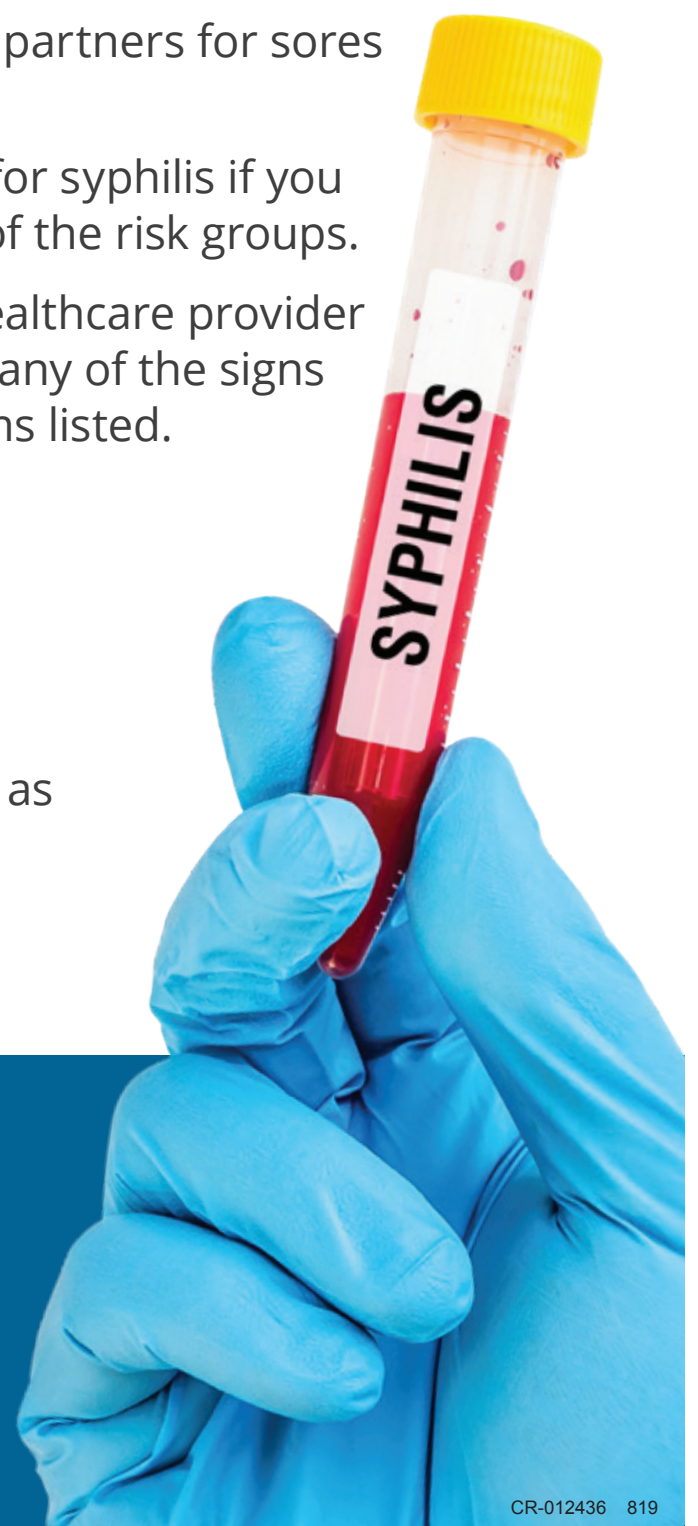
- People who have unprotected sex
- Men who have sex with men
- People with HIV
- People with many sex partners
- Pregnant women who are infected (unborn babies may be at risk for birth defects)

Is syphilis curable?

Yes, syphilis can be cured with the right treatment. However, treatment might not undo any damage that the infection has already done. If you believe you may have syphilis, get tested as soon as possible.

How can I protect myself?

- Practice safe sex using latex condoms.
- Check your partners for sores or rashes.
- Get tested for syphilis if you are in one of the risk groups.
- See your healthcare provider if you have any of the signs or symptoms listed.



For more information about sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) and places that provide no-cost testing, call DHEC's STD/HIV Hotline at 1-800-322-2437 or visit www.scdhec.gov/stdhiv.