

Syphilis Fact Sheet

This clinic is offering testing for syphilis. Your doctor, nurse or health worker may ask you if you would like to have a syphilis test today.

What is syphilis?

It is an infection which is passed on during sex. Many people who have syphilis don't know they have it until they have a blood test. Some people get sores or lumps on their private parts and/or a rash the palms of their hands and soles of their feet.

Why is it important in my community now?

Some local people have been getting sick with syphilis. Syphilis germs stay in your body until you get treated.

Who might get syphilis?

Usually young, sexually active people. Both men and women can get syphilis. It can also be passed on from a mother to her unborn baby.

Who should have a test?

Men and women aged up to 40 years.

Why does it need treatment?

Syphilis can cause death of unborn babies or mental or physical damage to babies. It can also affect your heart, bones or brain. Syphilis is really easy to pass onto sexual partners.

What is the treatment?

Syphilis is easily treated with antibiotics.

What else needs to be done?

Sexual partners need to be tested and treated.

How do you stop it being passed on?

By getting tested and treated. Also by using condoms for sex, staying with one partner who stays with you, getting tested before starting a new relationship, getting tested early when you are pregnant.

Questions?

Ask your health worker, nurse, midwife, or doctor.

