

Kent County Health Department

700 Fuller NE, Grand Rapids, MI 49507, 336-3085

We respect your right to responsible sexuality!

SYPHILIS

FACTS:

- Can get it by having vaginal, anal and oral sex with someone who has it
- Syphilis has three stages and the symptoms and signs of each stage are different.

1st Stage:

- Usually a painless, reddish sore called a chancre that comes 10-90 days after vaginal, oral and anal sex with someone who has it.
- The sore(s) will go away in 1-5 weeks, but Syphilis is still in the body.

2nd Stage:

- Symptoms include a rash, flu-like symptoms and loss of scalp hair that show up 2 weeks to 6 months after the chancre.
- These will go away in 2-6 weeks, but Syphilis is still in the body.

3rd Stage:

- A person may never have symptoms again but the infection stays in the body until they get the right medication for it.

Testing:

- A blood test

If Left Untreated:

- If not detected early, it can progress to another, more severe stage.
- Syphilis can permanently damage your heart, brain and other vital organs and can even kill you.
- Can be passed from a mother to her baby during pregnancy and cause problems in the baby.

Prevention/Protection:

- Have your partners get testing and medicine. If they are not cured, they can pass it back to you or to another.
- Use a condom (rubber) every time you have vaginal, oral and anal sex.
- Limit your number of sex partners - the more partners you have, the higher your risk for getting an infection.

For More Information from The Centers For Disease Control And Prevention:

[Syphilis](#)

[Syphilis Information for MSM \(Men who have Sex with Men\)](#)

If you think you have an infection, get tested right away!