

Syphilis

What you should know

Syphilis is a bacterial sexually transmitted disease (STD).



It spreads through oral, vaginal or anal sex. Anyone who has sex with a person who has syphilis can get it.



A pregnant person who has syphilis can pass it to their baby.

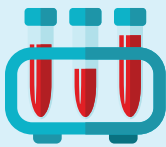


A syphilis outbreak is happening in Pierce County and the United States.

In 2020, Pierce County had 277 syphilis cases.

In 2021, it had 554 cases.

More and more babies are born with syphilis each year.



A blood test from a healthcare provider is the only way to know if you have syphilis.



The right medicine from a healthcare provider can cure syphilis.

If you get treatment for syphilis, all your sex partners must get treatment at the same time, too.



Follow instructions for how long to not have sex after treatment.



If you get treatment for syphilis and it goes away, you can get it again if you have sex with a person who has syphilis.

Many people who have syphilis do not notice symptoms.

Some may notice:



- Swollen lymph nodes.
- Fever.
- Muscle or joint pain.
- Changes to vision or hearing.



- Hair loss, rashes, open sores or wart-like bumps on genitals. Will go away, even without treatment.

Without treatment, syphilis can cause serious health problems, even death.



Have questions? Want more info?

Talk to your healthcare provider.

If you don't have one, call Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department's Sexual Health Clinic at (253) 649-1418.

Find more about syphilis and other STDs at [cdc.gov/std](https://www.cdc.gov/std).