

Infectious Syphilis Management Tool

For Professional Reference Only

Applicable to: Nurses, Physicians and Health Professionals



Who Should I Test?

Consider offering STI/HIV screening to all patients as routine care to normalize testing and reduce stigma.

Screen the following asymptomatic persons:

- All persons with new, anonymous, or multiple sex partners should be screened every 3-6 months.
- All pregnant persons should be screened in the first trimester and again at the time of delivery, as well throughout pregnancy if at ongoing risk.
- All persons with a confirmed or suspected STI.
- All persons with a sexual partner with an STI.
- All persons requesting STI testing.

Test all persons with STI related symptoms such as dysuria, vaginal or penile discharge, ano-genital or oral ulcers, unexplained rashes or skin eruptions, or lymphadenopathy.



How do I Test?

If testing for one STI/HIV test for all.

Serology for:

- Syphilis (Syphilis EIA)
- HIV (HIV antibody)
- Hepatitis C (HCV antibody)
- Hepatitis B surface antigen (if no documentation of immunity)

Urine NAAT (or cervical/vaginal swabs) for:

- Chlamydia
- Gonorrhoea

If a client has a chancre/rash/suspected syphilis:

- Swab chancre or moist rash for PCR *Treponema pallidum*
- Use sterile polyester tipped applicator for swab
- Send in universal transport medium



What is the Treatment?

All cases of syphilis should be managed in consultation with STI Services.

Long acting penicillin G benzathine 2.4 million units (Bicillin®) - 2 injections of 1.2 million units IM in a single session administered in the ventrogluteal site.

Warning:

Short acting penicillin G IM injection is not interchangeable with Bicillin®.



To access Bicillin® contact STI Services.

- All sexual contacts of cases, regardless of symptoms or signs, should be tested and immediately treated.
- Symptomatic clients (e.g. chancre, syphilitic rash) should be offered treatment immediately.

For guidance on treatment, please consult the [Alberta Treatment Guidelines for Sexually Transmitted Infections \(2018\)](#)



How do I Report to Public Health?

- Completion of a [Notification of STI form](#) is required for every person treated for confirmed or suspected STI.
- Interview and report sexual contacts from the last 12 months.



What Follow Up is Required?

- For infectious syphilis, repeat serology is recommended at 1, 3, 6 and 12 months following treatment.
- Women treated in pregnancy should have monthly serology while pregnant and again at delivery.



Where can I get more Information?

- STI Services: 1-855-945-6700, option 4
- [Ahs.ca/syphilis](https://www.ahs.ca/syphilis)