

INTEGRATED SEXUAL HEALTH SERVICE

SYPHILIS

Syphilis is a bacterial infection which can be treated relatively easily once detected, however signs of this infection are not always obvious.

How is it caught?

This infection is mainly caught through close sexual contact where someone comes into contact with an infected sore caused by the infection. This usually happens through vaginal or anal sex, oral sex or through sharing sex toys.

Someone who is pregnant can also pass this infection on to their baby and whilst this can cause complications screening is routinely offered so any infection can be treated before this occurs.

Will I know if I have it?

Symptoms aren't always obvious and for some people this infection has no symptoms at all, however this infection will require treatment. Symptoms which may occur, include;

- Small painless sores or ulcers at site of infection.
- A blotchy, red rash that often affects palms of hands or soles of feet.
- Small skin growths similar to genital warts
- White patches in mouth
- Tiredness, swollen glands, headaches and fever.

<http://sexualhealth.cht.nhs/think-sexual-health>



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Will it have any long term effects?

If detected and treated early then it is very unlikely that any long term health effects will occur. Where this infection is not detected and treated then eventually consequences may include;

- Heart problems
- Increased risk of Stroke
- Meningitis

However, these effects may only occur after infection has been present for a significant period of time, years or even decades, and the overwhelming majority of people do not reach this stage.

How can I best protect myself against Syphilis?

As with other STI's spread through skin to skin contact it is not always possible to be sexually active and completely avoid this infection. However, simple steps can help reduce risk;

- Using a condom/femidoms during penetrative sex.
- Using a dental dam (small square of latex) during oral sex
- Avoid sharing sex toys, or wash between uses and use condom where possible.

Where can I access testing?

Sexual Health Services can provide testing and treatment so if someone is concerned about this infection then call us on 01422261370 to make an appointment or call in to one of our Queue and Wait clinics. See website below for further details.

All pregnant women are automatically offered testing for Syphilis to prevent harm to parent and child.

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Sexual Health Calderdale and Huddersfield is part of the Calderdale & Huddersfield NHS Foundation Trust

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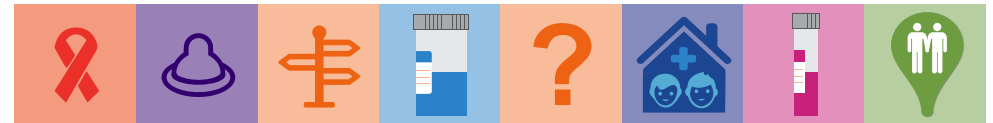
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