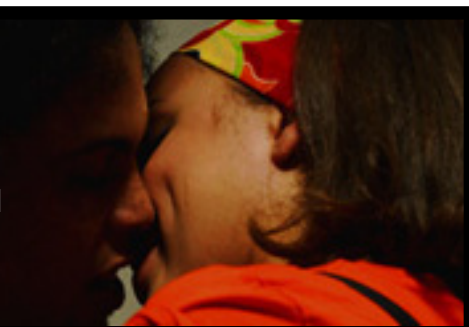


SYPHILIS

Syphilis is a bacterial infection and can be spread without either partner knowing. If left untreated it can over time lead to heart disease and brain damage. It used to be more commonly known as 'the pox'.



		<p>Woman's sexual organs (front)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1 Ovaries</td> <td>4 Cervix</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Fallopian tubes</td> <td>5 Vagina</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Womb</td> <td>6 Entrance to vagina</td> </tr> </table>	1 Ovaries	4 Cervix	2 Fallopian tubes	5 Vagina	3 Womb	6 Entrance to vagina						
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		<p>Woman's sexual organs (side)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1 Ovary</td> <td>6 Vagina</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Womb</td> <td>7 Anus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Fallopian tubes</td> <td>8 Cervix</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 Bladder</td> <td>9 Clitoris</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 Urethra</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1 Ovary	6 Vagina	2 Womb	7 Anus	3 Fallopian tubes	8 Cervix	4 Bladder	9 Clitoris	5 Urethra			
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		<p>Men's sexual organs</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>1 Scrotum</td> <td>7 Urethra</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2 Testicle</td> <td>8 Penis</td> </tr> <tr> <td>3 Vas deferens</td> <td>9 Foreskin</td> </tr> <tr> <td>4 Seminal vesicle</td> <td>10 Glans</td> </tr> <tr> <td>5 Bladder</td> <td>11 Anus</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6 Prostate gland</td> <td></td> </tr> </table>	1 Scrotum	7 Urethra	2 Testicle	8 Penis	3 Vas deferens	9 Foreskin	4 Seminal vesicle	10 Glans	5 Bladder	11 Anus	6 Prostate gland	
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SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Syphilis has three stages:

- Primary stage symptoms - painless sores can develop where bacteria has entered the body.
- Secondary stage symptoms - a rash can develop along with warty growths on the genitals often with a flu-like illness.
- Latent stage symptoms - if left untreated, over time syphilis can lead to heart, joint, brain and nervous system damage.

SYPHILIS

GETTING IT

Syphilis can be passed on during the primary or secondary stages through:

- Oral, vaginal or anal sex.
- Skin contact with any sores or rashes.
- From a mother to unborn child.

It is not usually infectious when there are no symptoms.

DIAGNOSIS AND TREATMENT

Blood samples will be taken and swabs from sores may be taken to check it is not herpes. Syphilis is treated with antibiotics, either as an injection or tablets.

If syphilis is suspected, you should not have oral, vaginal or anal sex and anyone you have sexual contact with, should not have contact with any sores or rashes you may have until your treatment is finished.

After treatment, you will be asked to attend the clinic at regular intervals for blood tests.

If you can, you should let anyone that you have had sexual contact with in the last 3 - 6 months know that they may have a sexually transmitted infection (STI) and that they need to be checked out and possibly tested. Staff at the clinic will offer you as much support as you need to do this.

In pregnancy, syphilis can cause miscarriage or stillbirth and can be passed from mother to unborn child in the womb. However, the baby can be easily treated with antibiotics after birth.

LONG-TERM EFFECTS

If left untreated, over time syphilis can lead to heart disease and brain damage.

If you think you may have syphilis, contact your local sexual health (GUM) clinic and make an appointment. It's easy and completely confidential.

For more information on sexual health (including HIV), call the Sexual Health Line free (from the UK) on 0800 567 123, textphone (for people with hearing impairments) 0800 521 361 or phone your local NHS sexual health clinic.