

Syphilis update: explaining system of care

We continue to see increased rates of syphilis across the Island Health region, most pronounced in Central Island. This newsletter explains the system of care for syphilis within Island Health to support your patients, their contacts, and you as a provider. For more information on syphilis, see recent MHO newsletter: bit.ly/MHOsyphilisnewsletter.

Key points:

- Screen widely for syphilis
- BCCDC manages syphilis results and works with the ordering provider to organize treatment
- For positive syphilis tests ordered through emergency rooms, and for ordering providers unable to provide syphilis treatment, BCCDC will organize treatment through an alternate provider

Situation	Action for healthcare providers	Resources
Screening (asymptomatic testing)	Encouraged to integrate screening into routine practice, including in emergency and urgent care settings, for all sexually active persons once and then q3-6months if new or multiple partners. Alternatively, refer patients to smartsexresource.com or getcheckedonline.com (available in Victoria, Langford, Duncan)	Write 'syphilis test' on any lab requisition Syphilis screening guidelines: bit.ly/CDNsphilisscreening
Management of suspected primary syphilis (painless chancre)	1. Swab lesion (Aptima or UTM, complete BCCDC req at bit.ly/BCCDCzdep , consultation no longer required) 2. Provide empiric treatment if Bicillin is on site, or order Bicillin from BCCDC to administer once received 3. Order syphilis serology (and test for HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea) Alternatively, refer patients to smartsexresource.com	Bicillin administration: bit.ly/BCCDCbicillin STI medication order form: bit.ly/BCCDCstiorder
Management of syphilis based on test results	BCCDC automatically receives all positive syphilis results, stage and determine treatment required, organize treatment and follow-up Ordering provider: BCCDC will contact you to determine if you can follow-up with patient to provide treatment. If not possible, BCCDC will organize treatment at an alternative site. <i>You do not need to act before BCCDC contacts you.</i> For positive tests ordered through ER, BCCDC will contact case directly to arrange treatment in community.	Continuing education online course: bit.ly/syphilisCPD Syphilis decision support tool: bit.ly/BCCDCsyphilisDST Treatment guidelines: bit.ly/PHACsyphilis
Management of syphilis contacts (reporting sexual contact with case in last 90 days)	1. Provide empiric treatment if Bicillin is on site, or order Bicillin from BCCDC to administer once received 2. Order syphilis serology (and test for HIV, chlamydia, gonorrhea) Alternatively, refer patients to smartsexresource.com	Bicillin administration: bit.ly/BCCDCbicillin STI medication order form: bit.ly/BCCDCstiorder

The Population & Public Health team is working to identify and address gaps in access to screening, testing, and treatment, including outreach, for all sexually transmitted and blood borne infections.

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islandhealth.ca/about-us/medical-health-officers