

Congenital Syphilis

What to Know

to Protect Yourself and Your Baby

Congenital syphilis has increased by 10 times in the last decade.**

Did You Know?

Recently, the number of babies being born with syphilis has been increasing in the U.S.

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Congenital syphilis is when a mother that has syphilis, passes the infection to her baby during pregnancy.

Up to 2 out of 5 babies (40%) born to mothers with untreated syphilis die from the infection.*

Why Does This Matter?

Babies born with congenital syphilis can suffer major health impacts:

- Deformed bones
- Jaundice and severe anemia
- Brain and nerve issues
- Death

A mother that has syphilis and has not been treated could suffer:

- Miscarriage
- Stillbirth
- Premature birth
- Low birth weight

How to Prevent Congenital Syphilis

- If pregnant, your prenatal care provider is required by law to test you at your first prenatal visit and again at 28 weeks.
- If you test positive, there is treatment available to cure the infection.
- Reduce your risk of getting syphilis before and during your pregnancy by:
 - Practicing safer sex by using a condom to prevent STIs like syphilis.
 - Getting regular STI testing.

Sources:

* CDC Vital Signs (December 2023). *Syphilis in Babies Reflects Health System Failures, Tailored strategies can address missed prevention opportunities during pregnancy.* cdc.gov/vitalsigns/newborn-syphilis/index.html

** CDC Newsroom (November 2023). *U.S. Syphilis Cases in Newborns Continue to Increase: A 10-Times Increase Over a Decade.* cdc.gov/media/releases/2023/s1107-newborn-syphilis.html

For information on
FREE STI/HIV services,
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