

How do you stop getting syphilis?

- have an STI test
- have regular health checks
- use condoms and water-based lube every time you have sex
- if you are trying to have a baby, have sex with only your partner.

Condom tips

1



Check expiry date and open carefully

2



Check the condom is the right way up

3



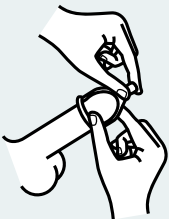
Roll down all the way

4



Apply water-based lube

5



After sex, remove carefully



Consent

Always check in with your partner before and during sex

Where can you get more information?

- See your local health clinic or doctor
- Call the Sexual Health Helpline
metro: 9227 6178
country: 1800 198 205

healthywa.wa.gov.au
healthysexual.com.au



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Government of Western Australia
Department of Health

All about Syphilis



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What is syphilis?

Syphilis (also called the pox) is a sexually transmissible infection (STI) that can make you sick. STIs are caused by germs that are spread through having sex with someone who has the infection.

How do you get it?

Anyone who has vaginal, anal (bum) or oral (mouth) sex without a condom can get syphilis.

How do you know if you have it?

You can get a sore on the part of the body where you have sex. This is usually on your private parts, but it can also be on your lip, mouth or tongue. The sore does not always hurt, so sometimes you won't notice it. The sore will go away by itself, but the syphilis germs stay in the body.

If you don't get treated, you can get a rash on parts of your body, including the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. The rash will also go away by itself, but syphilis germs still stay in the body.



How do you get tested?

The only way to test for syphilis is a blood test at the doctors or at the clinic. If there is a sore, the clinic will need to take a swab test.

You should get a test if you:

- have had sex without a condom, condom was not used properly, condom fell off or condom broke
- have had a new sex partner or more than one sex partner in the last year
- have discharge, pain, rash or sores in or on your private parts
- have had sex with someone who has an STI
- can't remember if you have had sex with a condom (e.g. I was drunk or on drugs)
- are not using condoms because you and your partner want to have a baby.

What if you have it?

If you have syphilis, you will get treatment with a needle (antibiotics). Early treatment works really well. When you have had all the needles, go back to the clinic for another test to make sure you are cured.

If you have been treated for an STI, it is important to let your sex partner(s) know. If you or your sex partners are not treated, you may get syphilis again.

You can tell your sex partner(s) yourself or the clinic can talk to your sex partners for you without telling anyone your name. There is also a website that you can use to send your sex partner(s) a text message or email without using your name – visit bettertoknow.org.au

What happens if you don't get treated?

You can carry syphilis germs for many years, and the germs can damage your brain, heart and other parts of your body. Even if you have no sores or other signs of syphilis, it can still be damaging you on the inside.

The syphilis germs stay in your body until you get treated. If you don't get treated, you can pass it on to anyone you have sex with.

If you are pregnant and have syphilis and it is not treated early, it can hurt the baby. The baby could die or be born with a disability or other serious health problems. You need to get a check before or as soon as you get pregnant, to test for syphilis and treat if needed.

