



October 16, 2018

Medical Alert: Syphilis

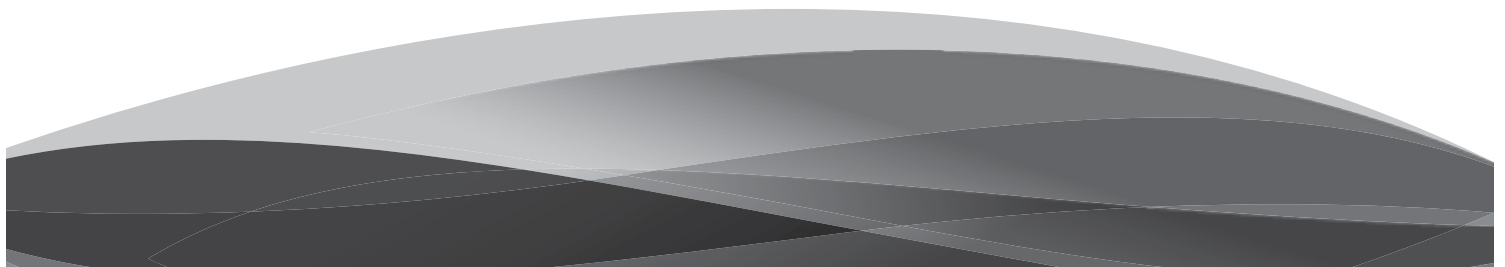
There has been an increase over August and September in the incidence rate of syphilis in Kenora. The increased risk may affect Kenora and the surrounding First Nation communities of the Kenora Health Hub. Risk factors for syphilis include multiple sexual partners, sex worker, substance misuse, being underhoused or homeless, other sexually transmitted infections, MSM or a sexual partner of a high risk individual.

Northwestern Health Unit (NWHU) continues to do case and contact follow up, and have increased communication and programming to high risk groups and the general public.

Please consider:

- Testing for syphilis and other sexually transmitted infections for those who are at risk
- Testing during pregnancy:
 - Universal screening of all pregnant women during the first trimester.
 - Screening test should be repeated at 28-32 weeks and again at delivery in women at high risk of acquiring syphilis. More frequent re-screening may be considered.
- Consider testing in patients with a rash that could be a sign of syphilis; the rash is typically on the palms, soles and flexor areas of extremities.
- Providing counselling to patients on importance of condoms and dental dams; these are available from NWHU at no charge for distribution through your clinic.
- Treatment for sexually transmitted infections can be made available at no charge; please contact NWHU to arrange for free medication through your clinic.
- Notifying Northwestern Health Unit if you suspect a diagnosis of syphilis

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Resources:

Testing:

[Syphilis Serology - Public Health Ontario](#)

[Syphilis serology testing update \(2017\) - Public Health Ontario](#)

[Syphilis - Chancre - Direct Fluorescence - Public Health Ontario](#)

[Syphilis - CSF - Public Health Ontario](#)

Treatment:

[Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections - Syphilis](#)

[2016 Updates to the Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections](#)

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