

### **Equinox Gender Diverse Health Centre**

<<https://equinox.org.au/>>  
(03) 9416 2889

### **PRONTO!**

<[thorneharbour.org/lgbti-health/pronto/](http://thorneharbour.org/lgbti-health/pronto/)>  
(03) 9416 2889

### **Victorian Aboriginal Health Service (VAHS)**

<[www.vahs.org.au/](http://www.vahs.org.au/)>  
9419 3000

### **Ballarat Community Health Sexual Health Clinic**

<[bchc.org.au/service/sexualhealth-clinic/](http://bchc.org.au/service/sexualhealth-clinic/)>  
(03) 5338 4500

### **Bendigo Community Health Sexual Health Clinic**

<[www.bchs.com.au/sexual-health-clinic](http://www.bchs.com.au/sexual-health-clinic)>  
(03) 5434 4300 or (03) 5448 1600

### **Gateway Health Clinic 35**

<[www.gatewayhealth.org.au/services/sexual-health-clinics](http://www.gatewayhealth.org.au/services/sexual-health-clinics)>

#### **Wodonga:**

(02) 6022 8888 or 1800657 573

#### **Wangaratta and Myrtleford:**

(03 5723 2000)

### **Sunraysia Community Health Services**

<[www.schs.com.au/](http://www.schs.com.au/)>  
(03) 5022 5444

### **Barwon Health Sexual Health Clinic**

<[www.barwonhealth.org.au/servicesdepartments/item/sexual-healthinformation-screening](http://www.barwonhealth.org.au/servicesdepartments/item/sexual-healthinformation-screening)>  
(03) 5226 7489

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Queensland Government



# Syphilis

A guide for women

## Talk Test Treat

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Available at Better Health Channel <[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/ConditionsAndTreatments/syphilis](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/ConditionsAndTreatments/syphilis)>

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## What is syphilis?

**Syphilis is a sexually transmissible infection (STI). If left untreated it will stay in your body and can be passed on to sexual partners, or to an unborn baby during pregnancy.**

**ANYONE who has ever had unprotected oral, vaginal or anal sex can get syphilis if their sexual partner was infected – whether they've had just one sexual partner or many.**

It's not easy to know if you have an STI, including syphilis, as often there are few or no symptoms.

Symptoms may include a hard, painless sore or ulcer usually on the genitals, mouth or anus. Some people develop a flat, red, skin rash on their back, chest, hands and feet.

## Syphilis in Victoria

Syphilis infections have increased rapidly over the past decade in Victoria, particularly in women and men who have sex with men and who are aged 20 to 39 years.

## Syphilis in pregnancy

A pregnant woman with untreated syphilis can unknowingly pass it on to her unborn baby (this is called congenital syphilis), which can cause serious harm.

It is important to test for syphilis when you are pregnant because the infection can be treated before the baby is born and prevent or lessen the harm to the baby. If you test positive for syphilis, you will need to be treated right away. When your baby is born, you and your baby will need to be tested for syphilis again one or two times.

## Congenital syphilis

Congenital syphilis can be a serious illness for babies. A baby with syphilis may die before being born (stillbirth) or shortly after birth; be born too soon or have serious issues with their body and brain.

## Testing

Testing is a quick and easy blood test. You can get tested at your local doctor, your pregnancy health checks, or your local community health or sexual health centre.

And whilst you're getting tested for syphilis, get tested for other STI like chlamydia, gonorrhoea, hepatitis B and HIV. They are also easy to test for, and treat, and you'll have peace of mind.

## Treatment

Syphilis is cured quickly and easily with antibiotics. Early treatment for syphilis in pregnancy is safe and effective for mother and baby. The earlier the infection is treated, the less likely your baby will be harmed.

## Preventing further spread

It is important to let your sexual partner/s know that you have syphilis so that they can also be tested and treated. If your partner/s are treated, it can help prevent you from getting the infection again.

You can let your partners know anonymously and confidentially. Your local doctor or health service can help you do this.

Be proud of your choice to get tested and look after yourself. Remember to also practise safe sex with condoms (for all types of sex) to stop the spread of syphilis and other STI.

## Where to get help

Your local doctor, community health, sexual health or Aboriginal health service.

### Better Health Channel

<[www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/syphilis](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/health/conditionsandtreatments/syphilis)>

### Melbourne Sexual Health Centre

<[www.mshc.org.au](http://www.mshc.org.au)>  
(03) 9341 6200 or 1800 032 017  
TTY (for people with a hearing impairment) (03) 9347 8619

**Partner Notification Officers** can help you anonymously notify your partners.  
(03) 9096 3367

### Let Them Know

<[www.letthemknow.org.au](http://www.letthemknow.org.au)>  
Helping people tell sexual partners that they might also be at risk

### Family Planning Victoria

<[www.fpv.org.au](http://www.fpv.org.au)>  
1800 013 952 or (03) 9257 0100

### 1800MyOptions

<[www.1800myoptions.org.au/](http://www.1800myoptions.org.au/)>  
Statewide phone service for information about sexual health, contraception and pregnancy options  
1800 696 784

### Thorne Harbour Health

<[thorneharbour.org/](http://thorneharbour.org/)>  
(formerly Victorian AIDS Council)  
(03) 9865 6700 or 1800 134 840

### The Centre Clinic, St Kilda

<[thorneharbour.org/lgbti-health/centre-clinic/](http://thorneharbour.org/lgbti-health/centre-clinic/)>  
(03) 9525 5866