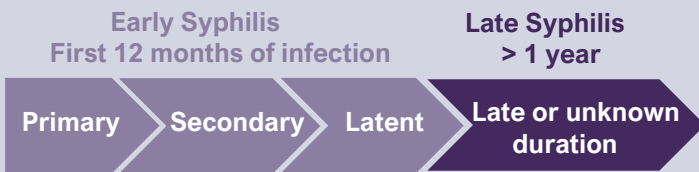


Late Syphilis in New York State

Current Trends & Prevention Strategies

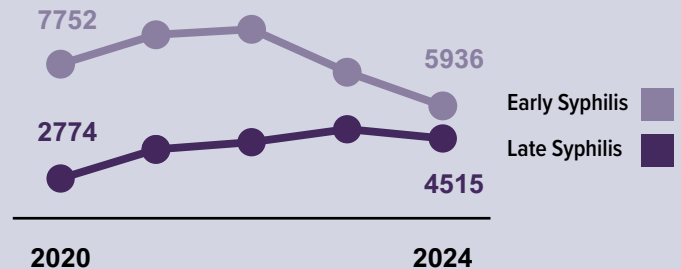
? What is Late Syphilis?

It is the final stage of syphilis. It occurs when the infection is not treated for more than a year. In this stage, syphilis can progress to tertiary syphilis. This may cause serious damage to the heart, blood vessels, and nervous system. It can even lead to death. Infections of unknown duration are treated as late syphilis and may impact surveillance and epidemiological trends.



↑ Late Syphilis is Rising

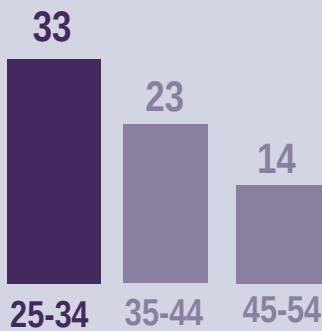
From 2020 to 2024, **late/unknown duration syphilis** diagnoses nearly doubled ...



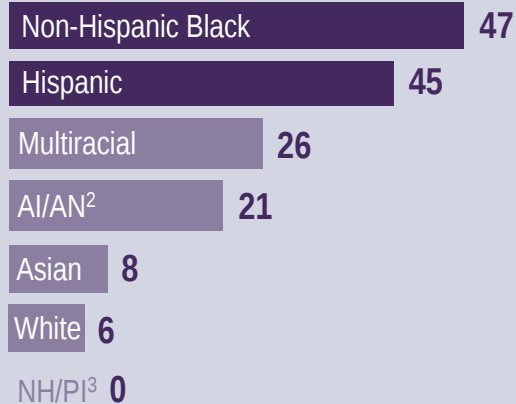
...while **early syphilis** diagnoses declined **23%**.

Key Populations

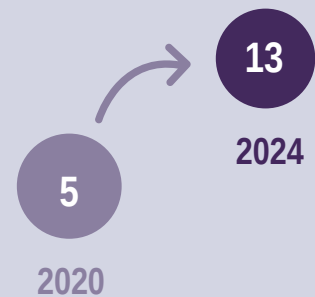
In 2024, late/unknown duration syphilis rates¹ in New York State were:



Highest among those ages **25-34**,



and among certain racial/ethnic minority communities,



with rates for **females**⁴ nearly **tripling** from 2020 to 2024.

DID YOU KNOW?

Late syphilis is not transmitted sexually, but **pregnant persons with this infection can still pass it to their fetus (congenital syphilis)**.



In 2024, **37** cases of congenital syphilis were reported in New York State (outside of New York City). Of those, 35% had birthing parents diagnosed with **late syphilis**.

Notes

¹ Rates per 100,000 persons

² American Indian/
Alaskan Native

³ Native Hawaiian/
Pacific Islander

⁴ Sex assigned at birth

Importance of Accurate Syphilis Staging



Syphilis stage determines treatment dosage. The preferred treatment for all stages of syphilis is penicillin G. Early syphilis requires one dose (2.4 million units), while late syphilis or syphilis of unknown duration requires three doses (7.2 million units). Accurate staging ensures the correct dosage is provided.¹

Penicillin G is the only recommended treatment for pregnant persons and babies with congenital syphilis.¹ Therefore, accurate staging helps preserve and prioritize penicillin for these populations during times of drug shortages. Nonpregnant persons with late syphilis or syphilis of unknown duration may be treated with doxycycline if penicillin G is not available.²

How to Prevent Late Syphilis

Public Health Professionals Can:

- Identify communities (persons, groups, or sexual networks) at increased risk in areas with surges in late syphilis diagnoses.
- Implement focused serological screening for those populations or communities at increased risk.
- Improve access to [rapid testing and treatment](#) within those populations and communities.

Health Care Providers Should:

- Provide required syphilis testing to pregnant women at first prenatal visit, at 28 weeks, and at delivery.
- Review resources to assist with accurate syphilis staging and treatment recommendations.
- Discuss STI prevention options with patients including [Doxycycline Post-Exposure Prophylaxis \(Doxy-PEP\)](#).

More Information & Resources

To view 2024 county-specific syphilis data (all stages), visit the [Annual Surveillance Report](#) (Page 43, Table 2).

To learn more about the epidemiological profile of syphilis, visit the [STI Dashboard](#).



For more information on **syphilis staging & treatment**, scan or click the QR code.



For more information on **syphilis during pregnancy**, scan or click the QR code.



For more information on **Doxy-PEP**, scan or click the QR code.

References

¹ Latent Syphilis – STI Treatment Guidelines

² Bicillin® L-A Shortage | CDC NCHHSTP

Office of Sexual Health & Epidemiology, June 2026, stdc@health.ny.gov



**Department
of Health**