Syphilis is surging in New York State
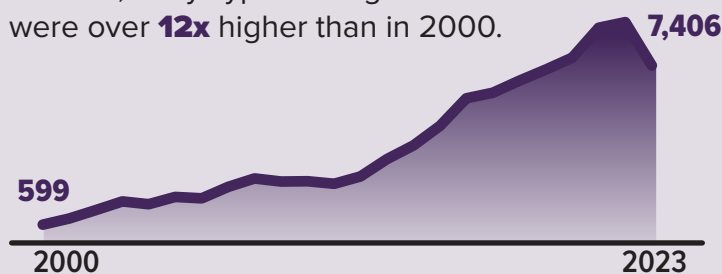## Overview through 2023
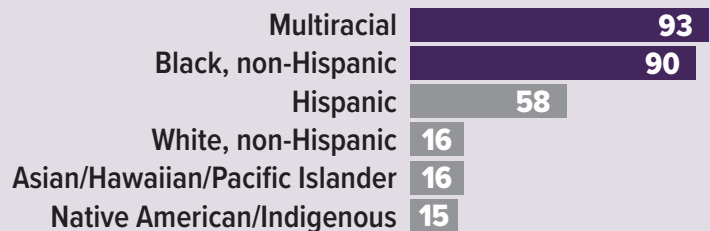
What is syphilis and why does it matter?

Syphilis is a treatable bacterial sexually transmitted infection spread through oral, anal, and/or vaginal sex. If left untreated, it may cause damage to the nervous system, eye, ear and internal organs, and can cause death.[1] Syphilis can be passed during pregnancy to the unborn baby (congenital syphilis) and may result in impaired fetal development, stillbirth, and infant death.[1]

Although early syphilis diagnoses (infection acquired in the past 12 months) decreased for the first time in over ten years, the number of diagnoses have risen substantially since 2000, disproportionately impacting communities of color.

In 2023, early syphilis diagnoses were over **12x** higher than in 2000.
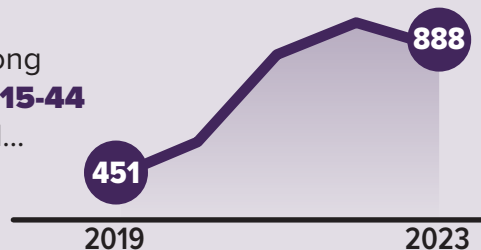
7,406

599

2000   2023

Early syphilis rates[2] in 2023 were highest among **Multiracial**, and **Black**, **non-Hispanic** persons.

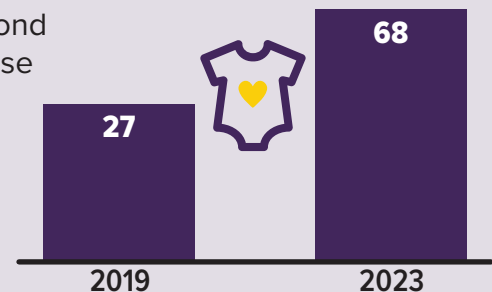|	
Multiracial	93
Black, non-Hispanic	90
Hispanic	58
White, non-Hispanic	16
Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	16
Native American/Indigenous	15

Recent increasing numbers of early syphilis diagnoses among females[3] of reproductive age correspond with the concerning rise in congenital syphilis cases.

From 2019-2023, early syphilis diagnoses among **females aged 15-44** nearly doubled...

888

451

2019   2023

... and correspond with the increase in the number of **newborns[4] with syphilis**.

27

68

2019   2023

PUBLIC HEALTH PROFESSIONALS CAN:

- **Improve** care coordination and utilize referrals for support services to eliminate barriers to care.
- **Collaborate** with community leaders, healthcare providers, policy makers, and other jurisdictions to improve surveillance and programmatic activities.

HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS SHOULD:

- **Promote** sexual health and wellness as an important aspect in overall patient care.
- **Reduce transmission** through identifying and treating undiagnosed persons and their sexual partners.
- **Provide** required syphilistesting to pregnant persons at first prenatal visit, 28 weeks, and at delivery.

NEW YORK STATE | **Department of Health**