Congenital Syphilis in North Carolina, 2021

Congenital syphilis cases increased in 2021

Confounder:
- Presumptive/Probable
- Confirmed-Live Birth
- Confirmed-Still Birth

Syphilis continues to increase in women 14-44

In 2021, 600 women were diagnosed with primary, secondary, or other early syphilis, and 562 were diagnosed with late/unknown duration syphilis.

Most women with syphilis during pregnancy are treated effectively

Most congenital syphilis is prevented

*2020 data should be treated with caution due to reduced availability of testing caused by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Data Source: North Carolina Electronic Disease Surveillance System (NC EDSS) (data as of September 7, 2022).
Syphilis testing during pregnancy is required for ALL women in NC

• Perform a thorough sexual health and behavioral risk assessment at every prenatal visit.
• Testing for syphilis is **required** at the first prenatal visit, between 28-30 weeks gestation, and at delivery.
• Treat all sexual partners of pregnant women diagnosed with syphilis to prevent re-infection.

Syphilis testing during pregnancy prevents congenital syphilis

How does a baby end up with congenital syphilis?

Findings from a review of NC congenital syphilis cases, 2016-2020

How to prevent?

• Identify women early in pregnancy and link to prenatal care.
• Test all women at delivery! This is the best safety net to identify infection among women and infants who had no or little prenatal care.

• Ensure **ALL** required testing is performed during pregnancy as described above and treat per the CDC guidelines.

• Ensure babies born to women who tested positive for syphilis are appropriately evaluated and treated for infection, per CDC guidelines.

What YOU can do

You deserve to have a healthy pregnancy and infant. Make sure that your doctor is testing you throughout your pregnancy for STIs.