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This sample is an excerpt from an academic paper on syphilis.

Syphilis

Syphilis is a venereal disease that is spread by the spirochete-shaped bacteria *Treponema pallidum* (American Public Health Association 421). It is transmitted by direct contact with infected bodily fluids, though usually not by kissing or touching. Unborn children contract the disease from their mothers during gestation or at delivery. Treatment with penicillin usually renders the host unable to pass on the disease within two days (American Public Health Association 422).

Within 10 to 90 days of exposure, a newly infected person will develop a chancre, which is a sore that is usually painless and may present on the anus, vagina, rectum, or mouth. The chancre appears at the location at which the bacteria entered the host, and it heals within weeks regardless of treatment. This is the primary stage of syphilitic infection (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

During the secondary stage of syphilis, the patient will develop a rough, red, raised rash on the palms of the hands and the soles of the feet. Sometimes that rash doesn't develop, but other rashes do appear on other parts of the body. Rashes caused by secondary syphilis will eventually disappear (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

After the secondary stage, the infection can become latent, or hidden, for a number of years. Eventually, up to 15 percent of patients who had secondary syphilis emerge from the latent stage and develop late-stage syphilis. Then, serious symptoms such as uncontrolled muscle movements, organ failure, blindness, and paralysis may occur. In the late stage, syphilis can be fatal. Late-stage infections can also have neurological involvement, characterized by dementia and problems with movement; some infections have cardiovascular involvement, characterized by heart and lung problems (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

Forty percent of pregnant women who are infected with syphilis have babies who are dead at birth or who die shortly thereafter. Infants who are born with the infection and do not receive rapid treatment generally have poor outcomes, including seizures, delayed development, and death. Pregnant women and infants can be successfully treated with penicillin (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).