

Eliminating Syphilis

Lancaster County, South Carolina

Why is Syphilis Elimination in the U.S. within our reach now?

- Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Infectious syphilis is at the lowest rate ever reported: 2.6 cases/100,000 population (6,993 total cases).
- Syphilis is now very concentrated; half of all new cases in 1998 were reported from only 28 counties, which represent less than 1% of all U.S. counties.
- Other industrialized countries have already eliminated syphilis.

Why is it Important to Eliminate Syphilis in Lancaster County?

- **In 1998 Lancaster County ranked 27th in the nation** in new cases of infectious syphilis (47 cases) and had a rate 31 times higher than the national rate.

- **To reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in health**

S 87% of cases are among African Americans (79% of cases nationally).

S The infectious syphilis rate in Lancaster County for African Americans is 19 times greater than the rate for white Americans.

- **To decrease spread of HIV infection**

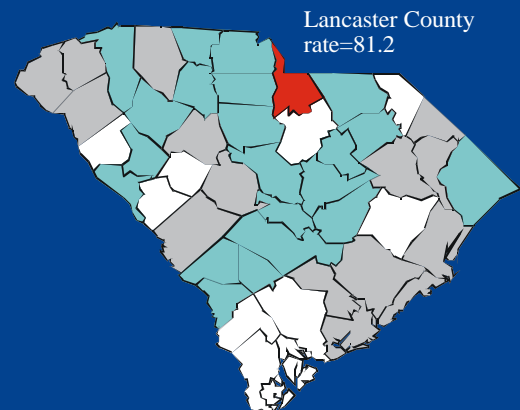
S Syphilis increases HIV transmission at least 2-to-5 fold.

- **To improve infant health**

S Syphilis can be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy causing stillbirths or congenital infection, some of which may result in persistent health problems.

S In 1998, 4 cases of congenital syphilis were reported from Lancaster County for a rate of 554.0 cases/100,000 births, 27 times higher than the national rate of 20.6 cases/100,000 births.

Infectious Syphilis — South Carolina, 1998



- 0 cases reported
- Rate ≤ 4/100,000*
- Rate > 4/100,000*
- One of 28 counties reporting half of new cases in the U.S.

* Healthy People 2000 objective is 4/100,000

1998 U.S.. rate: 2.6 cases/100,000 population

Lancaster County Responds

- Screening of persons at high risk for syphilis is conducted in the local county jail.
- Case prevention efforts have been intensified for all early syphilis cases reported.
- The county health department is visiting private health care providers to inform them of the syphilis problem and the syphilis services provided by the county health department.

For more information contact:

Tim Lindman
SC Department of Health & Environmental Control
(803)898-0649
(803)898-0573 (fax)

For media inquiries contact:

National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
Office of Communications
(404) 639-8895

<http://www.cdc.gov/StopSyphilis/>



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for HIV, STD, and TB Prevention

