

Eliminating Syphilis

St. Louis City, Missouri

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

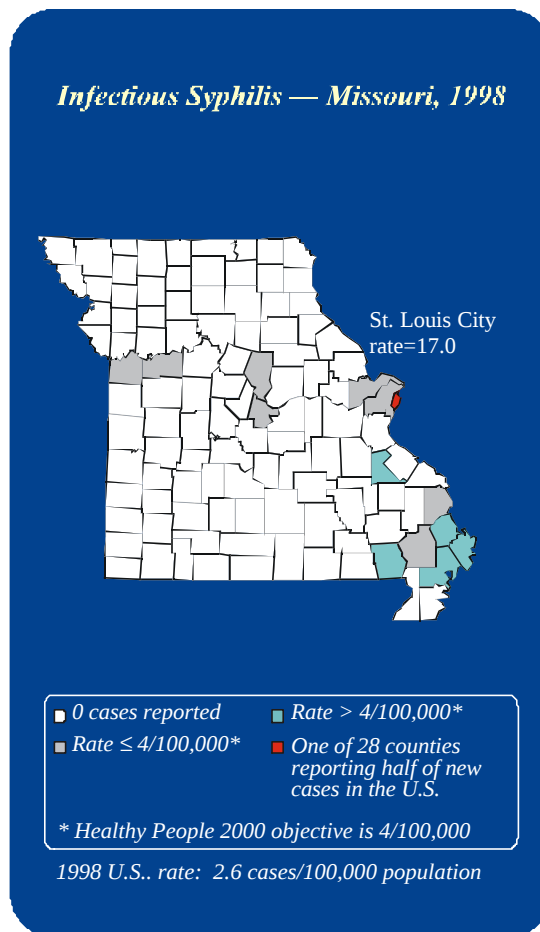
- Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Infectious syphilis is at the lowest rate ever reported: 2.6 cases/100,000 population (6,993 total cases).
- Syphilis is now very concentrated; half of all new cases in 1998 were reported from only 28 counties, which represent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

Why is it Important to Eliminate Syphilis in St. Louis City?

- **In 1998 St. Louis City ranked 20th in the nation** in new cases of infectious syphilis (58 cases) and had a rate greater than 6 times the national rate.
- **To reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in health**
 - S** 86% of cases are among African Americans (79% of cases nationally).
 - S** The infectious syphilis rate in St. Louis City for African Americans is 22 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, 3 cases of congenital syphilis were reported from St. Louis City for a rate of 51.2 cases/100,000 births, greater than 2 times the national rate of 20.6 cases/100,000 births.

St. Louis City Responds

- The St. Louis City STD Program plans to re-institute syphilis screening in the St. Louis City Holdover Facility.
- The St. Louis City STD Program will conduct a minimum of two additional syphilis screening events per month at homeless shelters, street, and other locations within the affected community.



For more information contact:

Mary Hayes
Missouri Department of Health
(573)751-6139
(573)751-6417 (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

