

Eliminating Syphilis

Tuscaloosa County, Alabama

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

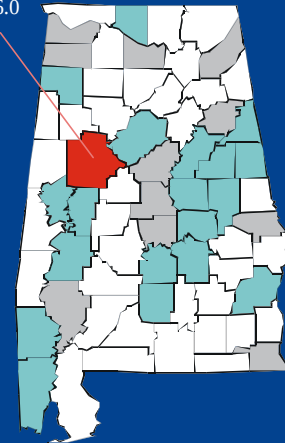
- Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Infectious syphilis is at the lowest rate ever reported: 2.6 cases/100,000 population (6,993 total cases).
- Syphilis is now very concentrated; half of all new cases in 1998 were reported from only 28 counties, which represent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

Why is it Important to Eliminate Syphilis in Tuscaloosa County?

- **In 1998 Tuscaloosa County ranked 17th in the nation** in new cases of infectious syphilis (74 cases) and had a rate nearly 18 times higher than the national rate.
- **To reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in health**
 - S** 81% of cases are among African Americans (79% of cases nationally).
 - S** The infectious syphilis rate in Tuscaloosa County for African Americans is 11 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, 2 cases of congenital syphilis were reported from Tuscaloosa County for a rate of 92.6 cases/100,000 births, greater than 4 times the national rate of 20.6 cases/100,000 births.

Infectious Syphilis — Alabama, 1998

Tuscaloosa County
rate=46.0



- 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

Tuscaloosa County Responds

- Stillman College, a local historically black college, partners with Tuscaloosa County Health Department to provide educational presentations and community screenings.
- The Tuscaloosa County Health Department extended its STD clinic hours from three to five days a week.
- The local Sheriff's Department, in conjunction with the local STD program, conducts STD educational presentations and offers syphilis screening to individuals requesting services in jail.

For more information contact:

Mike O'Cain
Department of Public Health
(334)206-5350
(334)206-2768 (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

