

# SYPHILIS

*Treponema pallidum*

Rev. 09/2019



**PUBLIC HEALTH**  
PREVENT. PROMOTE. PROTECT.

## Syphilis in Lane County

- 2019 is likely to set a new modern-day record of syphilis cases in Lane County. The count through August 31 has already surpassed all of 2018 and the previous modern-day record of 67 cases in 2017 (see graph).
- As recently as 2010, Lane County had only 5 syphilis cases in an entire year.
- In Lane County, syphilis is seen in all ages, from babies to people over 80 years old.
- The most common age group for syphilis is 20-29 years old.
- Syphilis is more common in males than females, with the majority of cases occurring in men who have sex with men.
- Secondary syphilis is often confused with other skin conditions (e.g., pityriasis rosea, alopecia, lichen planus, genital warts), earning it the title “The Great Imitator”.
- After many years with no congenital syphilis cases, Oregon and Lane County now reliably have a few cases each year.

## Improvement Opportunities

- Syphilis is a reportable disease. Remember to report a case to Lane County Public Health within one working day. Prompt reporting drives contact investigations, which reduces transmission.
- Patients with syphilis are at increased risk of getting other STIs, including HIV. Consider pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) to prevent HIV infection in persons with a bacterial STI in the last six months.

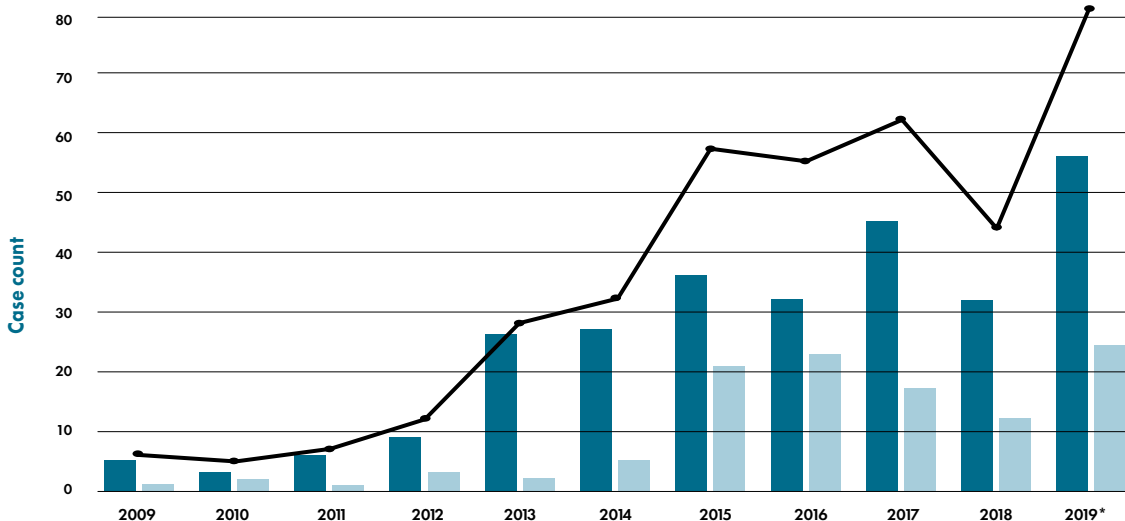
## PEARLS OF WISDOM

Syphilis is now common enough in Lane County that a rash in a sexually active adult should prompt the question: “Could this be syphilis?”

There are two syphilis testing algorithms: the traditional algorithm and the reverse algorithm. Learn which algorithm your laboratory uses in order to improve disease staging and the tracking of treatment efficacy.

If you need help with diagnosis, staging, or treatment of syphilis patients, please contact Lane County Public Health.

Lane County Syphilis Cases



## Resources

Syphilis Pocket Guide (CDC):  
[bit.ly/2NSh4oW](https://bit.ly/2NSh4oW)

Disease reporting  
in Lane County:  
541-682-4041

Syphilis testing algorithms:  
[bit.ly/2ZPB0nc](https://bit.ly/2ZPB0nc)

- Total count
- Male
- Female

\*through August 31

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*Lane County Public Health's mission is to promote and protect the long-term health and well-being of individuals, families and our community.*