

MATERNAL AND CONGENITAL SYPHILIS IN MICHIGAN

The number of congenital syphilis cases in Michigan has been increasing in recent years. Congenital syphilis poses a serious threat to infants, often resulting in severe illness or even death. Treatment for infants with congenital syphilis usually requires 10 days of inpatient intravenous therapy and can cost thousands of dollars. Fortunately, **congenital syphilis can be prevented** by testing pregnant women. (See [Syphilis During Pregnancy - CDC STI Treatment Guidelines](#) and [Congenital Syphilis - CDC STI Treatment Guidelines](#).)

Three steps to prevent congenital syphilis	What are we doing about it?
Pregnant women are tested for syphilis.	Public Act 538 of 2018 requires health care providers test for syphilis at the first prenatal visit, and again early in the third trimester.
Syphilis is treated during pregnancy.	MDHHS staff assist providers in ensuring that treatment for pregnant women is available and accessible.
Infant is tested for syphilis at birth.	MDHHS verifies that each mother was treated. If not, MDHHS ensures that the infant is treated.

How common is syphilis among women?

The number of women of child-bearing age (15-45) and the number of pregnant women with any stage of syphilis has tripled since 2018 (Fig. 1).

Has testing among women increased?

Yes, there has been an increase in testing among women since 2017. However, only slightly more than 50% of women have received prenatal screening as required by law (Fig. 2).

Congenital Syphilis:

In 2022, there were 37 reported cases of congenital syphilis in newborns (Fig. 3), indicating a 164% rise in diagnoses since 2017.

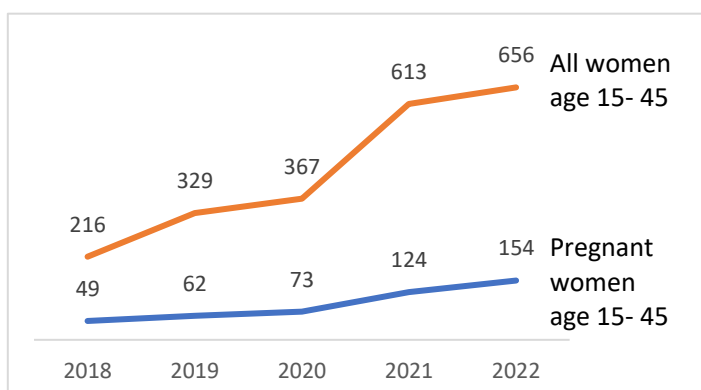


Fig. 1: Michigan syphilis (all stages) among women of child-bearing age

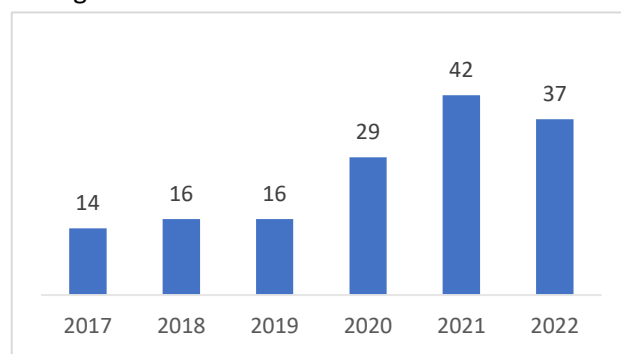


Fig. 3: Michigan congenital syphilis diagnoses

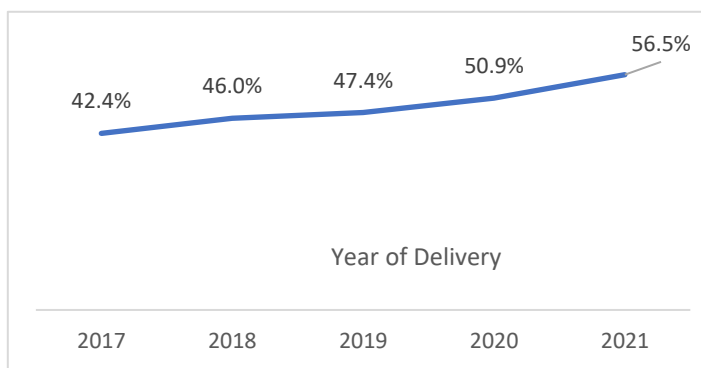


Fig. 2: Syphilis screening among Medicaid enrollees during 3rd trimester

As shown in Fig. 4, a notable 81% of pregnant women diagnosed with syphilis received the recommended treatment of either a one-dose or three-dose penicillin regimen, depending on the stage of syphilis. This treatment potentially prevented 125 additional cases of congenital syphilis in infants.

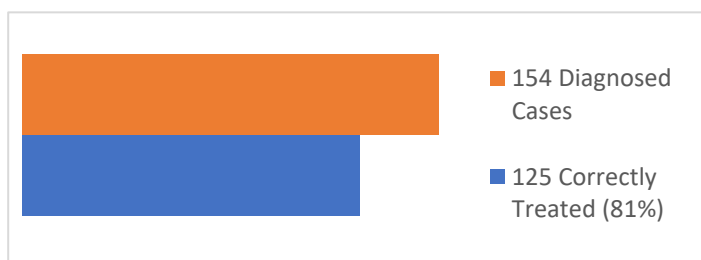


Fig. 4: Syphilis treatment among pregnant women (2022)