

Cases of congenital syphilis (CS) have risen in Michigan over the past several years and may lead to significant illness and even death for the infant. Treating an infant with CS typically involves 10 days of inpatient intravenous therapy, and can cost thousands of dollars. Fortunately, **congenital syphilis can be prevented through routine testing of pregnant women** following CDC guidelines. (See [Syphilis During Pregnancy - CDC STI Treatment Guidelines](#) and [Congenital Syphilis - CDC STI Treatment Guidelines](#))

| Steps to prevent and treat congenital syphilis (CS) | What is Michigan doing about it? |
|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Test pregnant women 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. |
| Treat syphilis during the pregnancy. | Michigan Department of Health & Human Services (MDHHS) staff assist providers in ensuring that treatment for pregnant women is available and accessible. |
| Test infant 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 (15-44 years), and the number of pregnant women, with any stage of syphilis have more than tripled since 2018 (**Figure 1**).

In 2023, 189 pregnant women were diagnosed with syphilis. As shown in **Figure 2**, 74% of women received the recommended treatment, potentially preventing 139 cases of congenital syphilis in infants in that year.

Figure 1: Syphilis (all stages) among women of child-bearing age

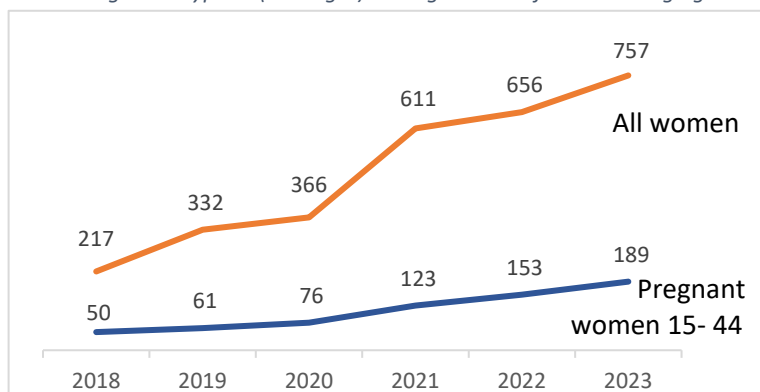
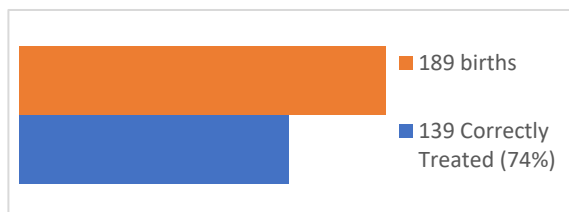


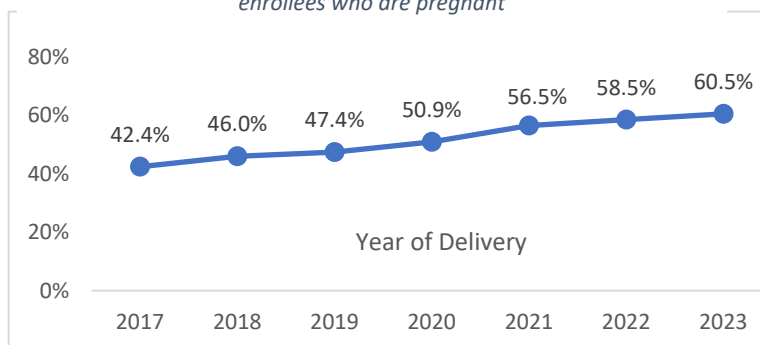
Figure 2: Syphilis treatment among pregnant women (2023)



Has testing among women increased?

Yes. While testing has increased among Medicaid enrollees since 2017, fewer than 60% of women received prenatal screening according to the law (**Figure 3**).

Figure 3: Syphilis screening during 3rd trimester among Medicaid enrollees who are pregnant



Congenital Syphilis:

Despite current prevention efforts, in 2023 there were 55 cases of CS in newborns (**Figure 4**). This represents a nearly four-fold increase in the number of diagnoses since 2017.

Figure 4: Michigan congenital syphilis diagnoses

