

Syphilis Testing and Treatment Toolkit

Purpose



The intention of this toolkit is to support treatment for syphilis cases and eligible contacts in clinical settings including, but not limited to: VCH Sexual Health Clinics, Community Health Centers (CHCs), Primary Care, Outreach and UPCCs. Clinics not using Profile EMR will have limited utility from this toolkit regarding syphilis diagnosis/staging and will need to use the linked treatment reporting tools for communicating with the VCH CD team.

Education

Registered Nurses to complete the following education:

- [LearningHub](#): BCCDC Overview of Syphilis for Healthcare Providers in BC #31222 (2 hrs)
- Review the BCCDC non-certified DST: [Syphilis](#)

Syphilis Testing

| Venipuncture Test | | |
|---|---|--|
| Specimen | Container | Requisition |
| Syphilis Serology (EIA) | SST (Gold top) 5 ml tube  | PHL Serology Screening Requisition |
| Lesion Swab | | |
| Syphilis NAAT (PCR detection of <i>Treponema Pallidum</i>) | NAAT swab used for CT/GC vaginal/urethral/rectal - Aptima Multitest or unisex swab - Universal Transport media (UTM)  | PHL Zoonotics Disease & Emerging Pathogens Requisition Check Off: <i>"Treponema pallidum Nucleic Acid Testing Submit exudate, tissue or body fluid"</i> <i>For LifeLabs/LM lab requisitions write in test as "TP NAAT Swab"</i> |

Syphilis Treatment

Refer to [BCCDC Non-certified Practice Decision Support Tool: Syphilis](#)

- All cases will have a client-specific physician order from BCCDC physician in Profile EMR encounter notes
 - VCH Primary Care clinics refer to existing Profile EMR workflow using client specific 'medication administration function'.
- VCH CD Team will fax the order for sites that do not use Profile EMR (e.g. UPCC)

First line treatment for syphilis is long-acting benzathine penicillin G 2.4 million units (Bicillin® L-A)

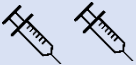

- Depending on stage of infection, clients may require one or three Bicillin doses repeated weekly
 - [Syphilis Treatment \(Bicillin® L-A\) Quick Tips](#)
 - [BCCDC Syphilis Treatment–Bicillin® L-A Video](#)
 - Provide patient education using [Penicillin G Benzathine \(Bicillin® L-A\) for Treatment of Syphilis](#)
- **DO NOT USE** if history of anaphylaxis or immediate reaction to penicillin
- All clients reporting a penicillin allergy should be assessed for eligibility for oral challenge- See Allergy to penicillin section
- Bicillin has known temporary side effect called Jarisch-Herxheimer Reaction: fever, chills, headache and/or fatigue (not an allergic reaction) that occurs 2-24 hours after administration of the antibiotic. Clients should be counselled about this potential reaction and supportive medications (i.e. Advil, Tylenol) if appropriate.

Doxycycline can be used as a **second line treatment** - Requires consultation with Physician/NP or BCCDC STI Physician ph: 604-707-5610

- **DO NOT USE** Doxycycline during pregnancy
- Review medication handouts, especially contraindications for all STI treatments on smartsexresource.com

Abstain from sexual contact for duration of oral therapy or for 7 days after initial Bicillin® L-A treatment

Stages of Syphilis & First Choice Bicillin Treatment

| | |
|---|---|
| Primary, Secondary, Syphilis or Early Latent (SEL) 2.4 million units IM of Bicillin® L-A (one dose) |  |
| Latent Syphilis of Unknown Duration (LSUD) or Syphilis Late Latent (SLL) 2.4 million units IM of Bicillin® L-A weekly for three weeks (three doses, 7 days apart) |  |

- This medication is dispensed as **TWO SEPARATE, preloaded** 1.2 million unit syringes
- Administered to the left and right VENTROGLUTEAL (preferred) muscle or DORSOGLUTEAL muscle, for a total of 2.4 million units, at the same time
- **DO NOT administer in deltoid or quadriceps muscle (Can cause severe neurovascular damage)**

Allergy to Penicillin

- If historical penicillin allergy is a concern, consult with physician or NP
- [Drop the Label](#) Penicillin allergy history, assessment and de-labelling tool
- When using [Drop the Label](#)
 - Click 'FIRSTLINE' button to start
 - Choose: Assessment -> De-Labeling Tool
 - Lead client through questions
 - If appropriate, follow protocol for amoxicillin oral challenge and monitoring
 - Profile EMR documentation, use template: delabel/
 - Review challenge outcome with physician/NP for Bicillin order or allergist referral

Treatment of Contacts

Follow [Treatment of STI Contacts DST](#)

- Certified RNs do not require an order to treat a syphilis contact, non-certified RNs require MD/NP order.
 - Test and treat syphilis contacts within last 90 days
 - Contacts beyond 90 days require testing only
 - Contacts to late latent syphilis (SLL) require testing only

Treatment Documentation

Profile EMR

- Document Bicillin® L-A administration per clinic guidelines

Other Electronic Medical Record

- Sites without Profile EMR FAX [Syphilis Treatment Form](#) to VCH CDC **604-731-2756**

Medication Ordering

All STI medications are ordered from BCCDC pharmacy

- **Maintain a stock of one set (2 units) of Bicillin®L-A for urgent need**
- Fax orders using [STI Drug Order Request Form](#) to BCCDC Pharmacy 604-707-2583
- For urgent requests please specify 'URGENT' and needed date for product
- Include clinic address, contact information, hours of operation and any closure times
- Indicate client initials, name or other identifiers for referencing (if applicable)
- Ensure all order forms are signed with an MD or NP signature (required)
- Please ensure receiving staff are aware of the cold-chain maintenance process for receiving, storing and handling Bicillin®L-A

BC CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL

STI DRUG ORDER REQUEST

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>SUPPLY TO:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid red; padding: 2px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="color: red; font-weight: bold;">REQUIRED: Clinic Name, Address, Contact Information and Operational Hours</p> </div> <p>Address:</p> <p>Postal Code:</p> <p>Opening Hours (include closure periods):</p> <p>Telephone No.: () _____ Date Ordered: </p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">YYYY MMM DD</p> | <p><input type="checkbox"/> MAIL ORIGINAL WHITE and YELLOW COPIES OF COMPLETED FORM TO:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">BCCDC Pharmacy BC Centre for Disease Control 655 West 12th Avenue, Room 1100 Vancouver, BC V5Z 4R4 Phone: 604-707-2580</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: x-small;">Retain PINK COPY FOR YOUR RECORDS YELLOW COPY WILL BE RETURNED WITH YOUR ORDER</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> If urgent, fax original to 604-707-2583 Please do not mail in this form if faxed.</p> |
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REQUIRED: MD/NP original signature

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|---|--|------------------------------------|
| PRACTITIONER'S SIGNATURE (Originals only - NO stamped or electronic signatures) | PRACTITIONER'S NAMES (please print) | COLLEGE REGISTRATION NUMBER |
|---|--|------------------------------------|

Note: There is no on-call service for STI shipments. BCCDC Pharmacy ships Mondays to Fridays, 08:30-16:30, excluding evenings and statutory holidays.

Cold Chain Management and Product Issues

- Bicillin®L-A must be refrigerated between (2-8°C).
- If Bicillin®L-A is removed from refrigerator, it can be replaced back in refrigerator, within 7 days. Try to keep product maintained in refrigerator up to client administration.
 - Temperature should not exceed 30°C
 - Protect from freezing
 - Consult with BCCDC Pharmacy (604) 707-2583 for cold chain excursions beyond 7 days

Resources

- [BCCDC Non-certified Practice Syphilis DST](#)
- [BCCDC Syphilis Treatment – Bicillin Video](#)
- [STI Drug Order Request Form](#)
- [Syphilis Treatment \(Bicillin L-A\) Quick Tips](#)
- [Syphilis Treatment Form](#)

