

Syphilis

Syphilis infections are divided into several stages: primary, secondary, early latent, and late latent. The initial symptoms of syphilis may not always be recognized and without treatment, individuals generally enter a prolonged asymptomatic phase. Individuals can still however, be infectious despite not having any symptoms. Syphilis infection can lead to serious complications, including cardiovascular and neurologic disease, and may be fatal.

Following a decline in rates in BC in the early 1990's, infectious syphilis (i.e., primary, secondary, and early latent stages) began to re-emerge in BC starting in 1997. While provincial trends had been decreasing in 2009-2010, infectious syphilis rates began to increase in 2011 and continue to remain high in 2017.

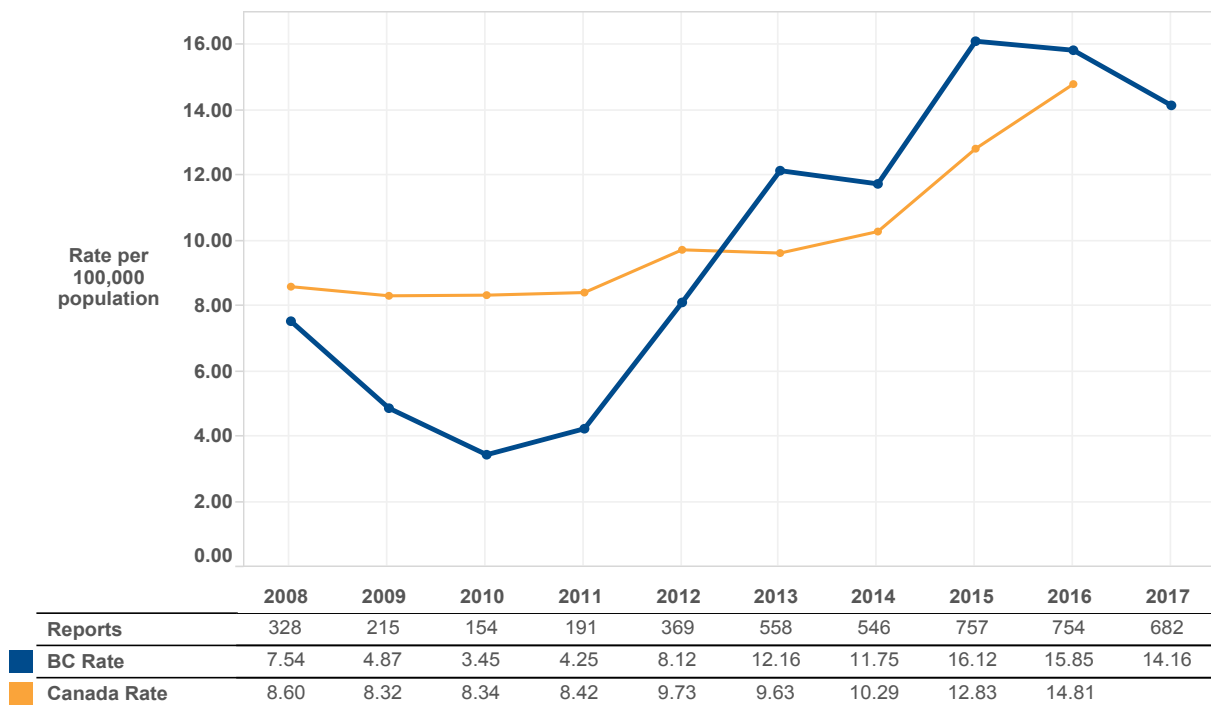
The majority of infectious syphilis cases in BC are male. Gay, bisexual, and other men who have sex with men (MSM) continue to comprise the greatest number of infectious syphilis cases in BC.

The BCCDC has developed a multi-prong strategy with various partners including the Regional Health Authorities, First Nations Health Authority, the BCCDC Public Health Laboratory, Perinatal Services BC, and the Office of the Provincial Health Officer to address the increase in infectious syphilis rates. Goals of this multi-prong strategy include increasing the awareness of syphilis among key populations and health care providers, enhancing surveillance of syphilis, maintaining high treatment completion rates, and optimizing the care of partners in order to prevent re-infection and onward transmission.

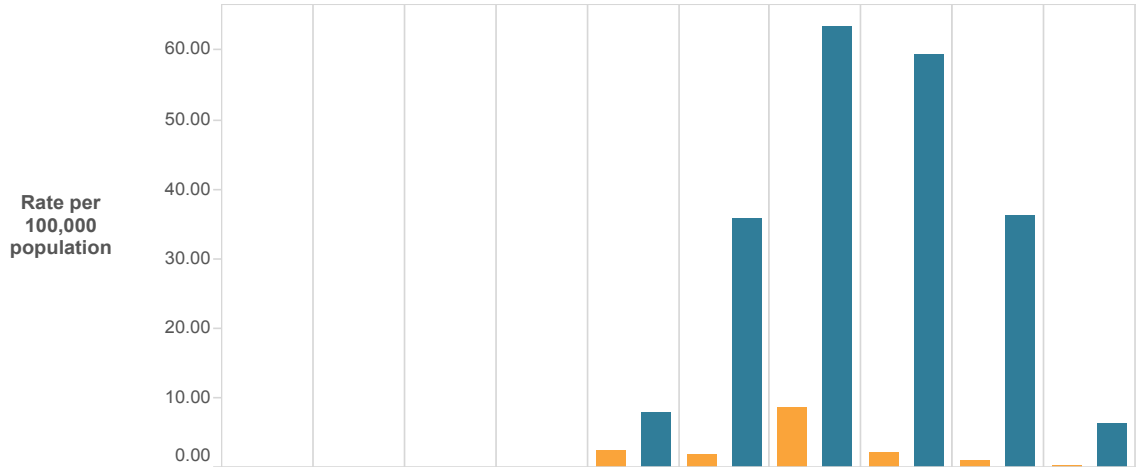
For more information on the epidemiology of infectious syphilis, please see the [STI Annual Report](#).



21.1 Syphilis Rates by Year, 2008-2017



21.2 Syphilis Rates by Age Group and Sex, 2017



		<1	1-4	5-9	10-14	15-19	20-24	25-29	30-39	40-59	60+
Reports	Female	0	0	0	0	3	3	14	7	7	1
	Male	0	0	0	0	11	62	104	192	237	36
	Total	0	0	0	0	14	65	118	201	246	38
BC Rate	Female	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	2.27	1.89	8.67	2.12	1.04	0.16
	Male	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	7.89	35.81	63.42	59.33	36.20	6.27
	Total	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	5.15	19.60	36.26	30.72	18.48	3.15