



**BC Centre for Disease Control**  
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

Immunization Programs and Vaccine  
Preventable Diseases Service  
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**Date: September 30, 2014**

**Administrative Circular: 2014:15**

**ATTN:** Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices  
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators  
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

**Re: Revisions to the Communicable Disease Control Manual –  
Chapter 5 Sexually Transmitted Infections**

**Please note the following changes to the Communicable Disease Control Manual –  
Chapter 5 Sexually Transmitted infections:**

**(1) BCCDC SYPHILIS DECISION SUPPORT TOOL – Updated – Discard and  
Replace Entire DST**

***Please note changes to pages 1- 12***

- **page 1 - *Preamble*** – included “Blood work for Syphilis is processed through the BC Public Health Microbiology Reference Laboratory (BC-PHMRL).”
- **page 1 - *Preamble*** – included “RN(C)s may independently treat syphilis contacts using the *CRNBC Treatment of STI Contacts DST*.”
- **page 1 – *Definition*** – revised - “\*For the purposes of this document, the managing physician or NP in community is working in coordination with a BCCDC Provincial STI/HIV Clinic physician and may provide a client specific order for syphilis treatment” replaced under – ***Preamble***.
- **page 2 – *Typical Findings*** – under *Sexual Health History* - revised for clarification. “Early Syphilis” and “Late Syphilis” included identifying syphilis staging and diagnosis along with infectiousness in relation to symptoms and stage of infection.
- **page 3 – *Typical Findings*** – under *Early Latent Syphilis (SEL)* revised for clarification - “..identified by a negative test within the past year and the client is asymptomatic.”

- **page 3 – Typical Findings** – under *Late Latent Syphilis (SLL)* revised for clarification – “...or duration of infection may be unknown and the client is asymptomatic.”
- **page 3 – Typical Findings** – under *Tertiary Syphilis – “dementia and ataxia”* included as neurological manifestations.
- **page 3 - Diagnostic Tests** – under *Syphilis Serology - Syphilis Screen* – removed rapid plasma regain (RPR) screening - replaced with - “order with routine STI screening. The lab test will show an Enzyme Immune Assay (EIA) result.”
- **page 4 - Diagnostic Tests** – under *Syphilis Serology – Syphilis Confirmation* - removed *T. pallidum* particle agglutination [TP-PA] – treponemal specific test - replaced with – “ if the EIA is reactive further testing will be completed by the lab to confirm Syphilis infection.”
- **page 4 - Diagnostic Tests** – under *Lesion Specimen Collection* – included “Send all specimens to the BC-PHMRL” and “**PCR Swab** (if available – appropriate for endemic regions). Transport medium available from BC-PHMRL upon request.”
- **page 4 - Diagnostic Tests** – under *Follow up Diagnostic Testing Post Treatment* – Primary, secondary, early latent syphilis (SEL) - removed “RPR” - replaced with “Syphilis test.”
- **pages 6, 7, 8 & 9 –Treatment of Choice** – removed “Bicillin” - replaced with “Bicillin LA®” throughout treatment tables.
- **page 6 – Treatment of Choice** – under *Primary, Secondary, Early Latent Treatment – First Choice – Note 1-* removed “Separate dose into 2 separate injection sites into ventral gluteal or dorsal gluteal sites.” – replaced with – “Bicillin LA® 2.4 MU comes divided into 2 separate injections (1.2 MU each) to be administered IM into ventral or dorsal gluteal sites on the same visit.”
- **page 6 – Treatment of Choice** - under *Primary, Secondary, Early Latent Treatment – First Choice – Note 5* – revised – “Clients should be made aware of this possible treatment reaction that presents as an acute febrile illness with headache, chills, and rigor, may occur soon following treatment, and is expected to resolve within 24 hours. This is not an allergic reaction.”
- **page 7 –Treatment of Choice** - under *Primary, Secondary, Early Latent Treatment –Second Choice – Note 1* – revised – “Clients should be made aware of this possible treatment reaction that presents as an acute febrile illness with

- headache, chills, and rigor, may occur soon following treatment, and is expected to resolve within 24 hours. This is not an allergic reaction.”
- **page 8 – Treatment of Choice** – under *Late Latent OR Syphilis of unknown duration - Treatment – First Choice – Note 1-* removed “Separate dose into 2 separate injection sites into ventral gluteal or dorsal gluteal sites.” – replaced with – “Bicillin LA® 2.4 MU comes divided into 2 separate injections (1.2 MU each) to be administered IM into ventral or dorsal gluteal sites on the same visit.”
  - **page 8 – Treatment of Choice** – under *Late Latent OR Syphilis of unknown duration - Treatment – First Choice – Note 6 -* revised “Clients should be made aware of this possible treatment reaction that presents as an acute febrile illness with headache, chills, and rigor, may occur soon following treatment, and is expected to resolve within 24 hours. This is not an allergic reaction.”
  - **page 9 – Treatment of Choice** – under *Late Latent OR Syphilis of unknown duration - Treatment – Second Choice – Note 1-* revised “Clients should be made aware of this possible treatment reaction that presents as an acute febrile illness with headache, chills, and rigor, may occur soon following treatment, and is expected to resolve within 24 hours.
  - **page 10 – Management of Syphilis Contacts** – under *Contacts to Primary, Secondary or Early Latent Syphilis* – removed– “note contact to syphilis and include both syphilis screening and syphilis confirmatory tests on the lab requisition.”
  - **page 10 – Management of Syphilis Contacts** – under *Contact to Late Latent Syphilis* – removed – “note *contact to syphilis* and include both syphilis screening and syphilis confirmatory tests on lab requisition.”
  - **page 11 – Potential Complications** – revised - “all body systems including cardiovascular and neurologic can be affected by untreated syphilis.”

**Please remove the following page from the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 5 Sexually Transmitted Infections, Section I – STI:**

- BCCDC Non-certified practice decision support tool – Syphilis June 2012 (pg. 1-12)

**Please insert the following updates to the Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 5 Sexually Transmitted Infections, Section I – STI**

- BCCDC Non-certified practice decision support tool – Syphilis Sept 2014 (pg. 1-12)

**A teleconference facilitated by BCCDC Clinical Leadership members will be available on October 29, 2014 from 2pm – 3pm to answer questions regarding changes to Syphilis diagnostic testing:**

**Dial-in Phone Numbers:**

1-877-291-3022 Toll Free - North America  
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If you have any questions regarding these practice changes, please contact Cheryl Prescott, Nurse Educator, Clinical Prevention Services at 604-707-5651 [cheryl.prescott@bccdc.ca](mailto:cheryl.prescott@bccdc.ca) or Manav Gill, Manger, Public Health and Education Services at 604-707-2746 [manav.gill@bccdc.ca](mailto:manav.gill@bccdc.ca).

Sincerely,



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BC Centre for Disease Control

pc: Ministry of Health

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