

Sexually Transmitted Infection - Syphilis

Why Is This Important?

Syphilis is a sexually transmitted infection (STI) spread through direct contact with a painless syphilis sore or rash through unprotected sex. Syphilis can also be transmitted from a pregnant woman to her baby during pregnancy or childbirth and, if left untreated, causes birth defects or death to the fetus. Untreated syphilis leads to organ and neurological damage and may cause death.

Infectious syphilis, reported here, includes *primary, secondary or early latent* syphilis cases (See [About the Data](#)).

What Is Being Done?

[What's Being Done In Saskatoon Health Region to Reduce STIs and Bloodborne Illness?](#)

To Learn More:

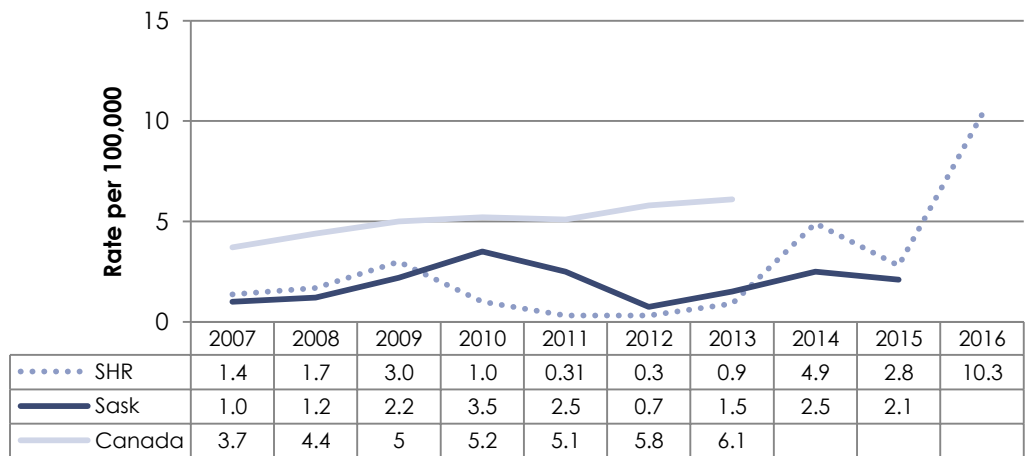
Chief Medical Health Officer's [Call to Action](#)

Highlights

After a period of decline syphilis rates are increasing again in the Region.

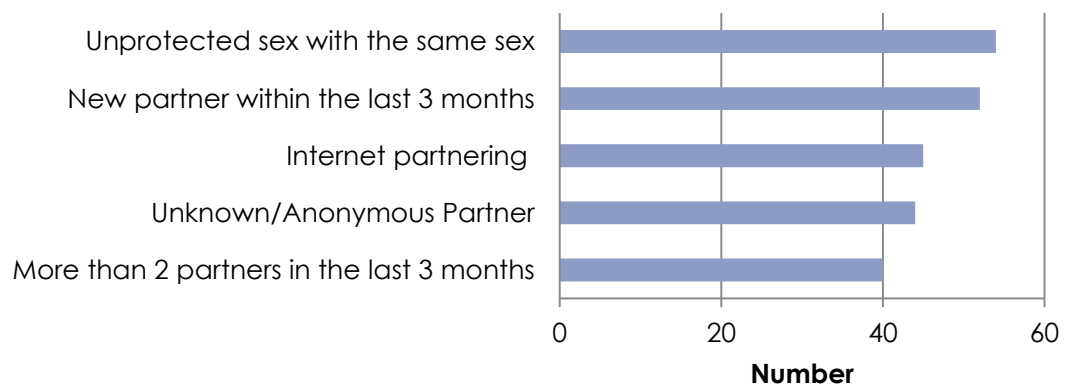
- Infectious syphilis rates in Saskatoon Health Region have been lower than national rates historically and lower than provincial rates (*Figure 1*). An outbreak, beginning in 2013, increased the rate dramatically.
- The Region's 2016 infectious syphilis rate was 10.3 per 100,000, tripling the rate from the previous year (*Figure 1*).
- The leading transmission risks for infectious syphilis since 2012 were male sex with men, new and anonymous partners and Internet partnering (*Figure 2*).
- Of the total infectious cases reported since 2013, less than five were female, more than half of which were of child bearing age. Sixty-seven percent of male cases were over 35 years of age (*not shown*).
- In the past five years 34% of cases were non-infectious (late latent). See [percentage syphilis by stage of disease](#).

Figure 1: Infectious Syphilis Rate per 100,000 Population, Saskatoon Health Region, Saskatchewan, and Canada, 2007 to 2016



Source: PHAC, iPHIS, Saskatchewan Ministry of Health

Figure 2: Top Five Infectious Syphilis Transmission Risks, Saskatoon Health Region, 2012-2016



Source: iPHIS