

CDC strongly encourages the following priority actions during the ongoing Bicillin L-A® shortage – Updated on July 20, 2023

Preserve Bicillin L-A® Supplies

- Prioritize using Bicillin L-A® to treat pregnant people with syphilis and babies with congenital syphilis – penicillin is the only recommended treatment for these populations.
- For non-pregnant patients, consider using doxycycline as an alternative treatment to help conserve Bicillin L-A® supplies. Refer to [CDC's treatment recommendations](#) for more information.
- Consider collaborating with antimicrobial stewardship leaders to implement systems-level approaches that limit the use of Bicillin L-A® and promote the use of other effective antimicrobials for the treatment of other infectious diseases.

Ensure Appropriate Syphilis Staging. Early syphilis (primary, secondary, and early latent) only requires 2.4 million units of Bicillin L-A®

Syphilis Staging Resources for Healthcare Providers:

- [Syphilis Pocket Guide for Providers](#) (CDC)
- [Syphilis Clinical Manifestations](#) (National STD Curriculum, UW)
- [The Diagnosis, Management and Prevention of Syphilis: An Update and Review](#) (NYC Health)

[See the CDC STI Treatment Guidelines](#)

- A thorough physical examination is necessary to accurately stage syphilis. Primary lesions might be hidden in the mouth, anus, or vagina, while signs of secondary syphilis may appear on the skin, mouth, or anogenital area (e.g., mucus patches, condyloma lata). The rash of secondary syphilis can be subtle.
- Historical syphilis serologic test results can aid in staging patients with latent syphilis. For instance, early latent syphilis can be diagnosed if there is evidence of a new infection within the last year (e.g., new seroconversion or a sustained four-fold increase in RPR titer in an individual with a history of syphilis).
- Review signs, symptoms, and sexual partner history from the past 12 months to determine the likelihood of syphilis acquisition within the last year, which would only require 2.4 million units of Bicillin L-A® instead of 7.2 million units.

Communication and Inventory

- Monitor the local supply of Bicillin L-A® and [analyze the local pattern of use to forecast the need](#) accurately.
- Continue to contact distributors to procure Bicillin L-A® as needed. If the supply is less than a 2-week dosage, the distributor has no supply, and there is a risk that patients may not be treated, reach out to Pfizer (refer to the "[Dear Patient Letter](#)" on the FDA website) for assistance.

- Clinicians with questions about syphilis clinical management should reach out to an Infectious Diseases specialist or consult the [online National Network of STD Clinical Prevention Training Centers \(NNPTC\) STD Clinical Consultation Network](#).

Full list of CDC recommendations [available here](#)