Clinical education:

# Introduction to sexually transmitted infections (STIs)

Dr Melanie Bissessor, March 2021





#### Why STIs?

- Every STI diagnosed reduces the duration of infectivity
- > It provides an opportunity to:
  - Discuss ways to reduce the risk of acquiring or transmitting an STI in the future.
  - Identify partners of infected people so they can be offered testing and treatment.



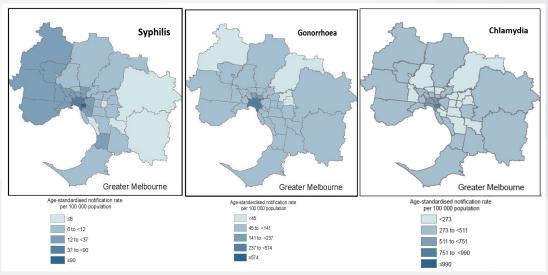
So even though you are dealing with an individual it has impact on the whole population.





# Local prevalence of common STIs

Average age-standardised STIs notification rate per 100 000 population

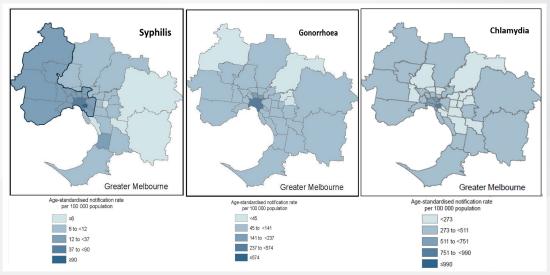


https://kirby.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/kirby/report/KI\_Annual-Surveillance-Report-2018.pdf



# Local prevalence of common STIs

Average age-standardised STIs notification rate per 100 000 population



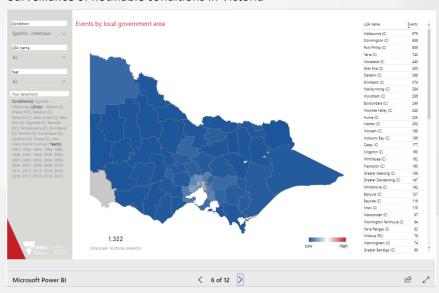
https://kirby.unsw.edu.au/sites/default/files/kirby/report/KI Annual-Surveillance-Report-2018.pdf





#### VIC DHHS Interactive Infectious Disease Report

#### Surveillance of notifiable conditions in Victoria





### Broaching the subject







### Starting a conversation about sexual health testing



• Bring the subject up opportunistically



• Use a "hook"



• As part of a reproductive health consultation

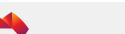


• Because the patient requests a "checkup" for STIs



#### The basics – sexual history

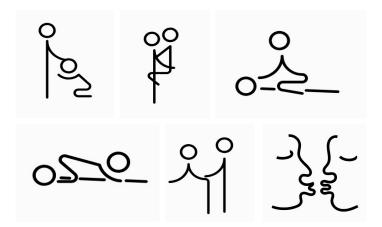
- WHO are you having sex with
  - Are you having sex / sleeping with men, women or both?
- WHAT types of sex are you having sex?
  - What type of sex are you having vaginal / anal / oral sex?
- WHEN did you have sex?
  - When did you most recently have sex?
- Why are these questions so important?





#### Remember language

When you think of sex what sexual practices would you classify as sex???







#### Normalising STI testing for your patient

#### Explain:

- The questions help work out which tests to do
- Everyone is asked the same questions
- Questions will be personal
- Reinforce STIs are common, often you won't know you have one and many easily treated
- ✓ Establish trust and make the patient feel comfortable
- ✓ Address the whole person
- ✓ MAKE NO ASSUMPTIONS







### Priority populations for STI screening



Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples



Young people 15-29 years of age



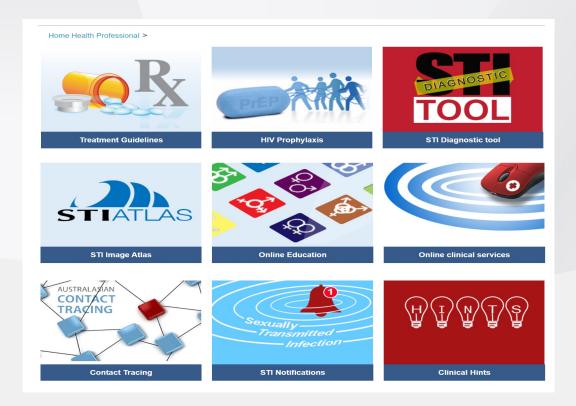








#### MSHC website-Health Professionals tab







# Urethral Syndrome





### Classification

- Gonococcal Urethritis
  - Neisseria gonorrhoea
- Non-Gonococcal Urethritis (NGU)
  - ~20-30% Chlamydia trachomatis
  - ~10-15% Mycoplasma genitalium
  - ~5% less common causes
  - ~50% No pathogen identified





## Symptoms

- Dysuria
  - Onset, duration, severity, intermittent continuous....
- Urethral Discharge
  - · Onset, colour, amount, underwear staining
    - tissue paper sign?
- Urethral Discomfort
  - Pain, irritation, itch, tingling....





# Complicated Symptoms

- Scrotal pain and swelling
- Phimosis or paraphimosis
- Conjunctivitis
- Reactive Arthritis
- Reiter's Syndrome
- Disseminated Gonococcal Infection



### Infectious Causes

#### Common

- Neisseria gonorrhoea
- Chlamydia trachomatis
- Mycoplasma genitalium

#### Less Common

- Herpes Simplex Virus
- Adenovirus
- Trachomatis vaginalis
- UTI

#### Others Implicated

- Vaginal commensals
  - Ureaplasma urealyticum/parvum
  - Gardneralla vaginalis
- Oropharyngeal flora
  - Neisseria meningititis
  - Haemophilus spp.
  - Streptococcus spp.





### Gonococcal Urethritis

- rarely asymptomatic
  - <<10%
- incubation
  - 1 to 14 days(~3 days)
- purulent discharge
  - scanty/moderate/profuse
  - underwear staining
  - tissue paper Sign
- dysuria +/-
- urethral discomfort +/-
- meatitis







### Non-Gonococcal Urethritis

- incubation
  - Chlamydia 2 to 4/52 (~3/52)
    - >50% is asymptomatic
  - Mg unknown
  - > Dysuria
  - absent to mild to moderate
  - intermittent to continuous
- urethral discomfort +/-
- meatitis







## Severe Dysuria

- Herpes Simplex Virus
- Sudden Onset, ~days
- Meatitis/ulceration
  - Tender
- Discharge +/-
- Inguinal lymphadenopathy +/-
- Preceded by or concurrent constitutional Symptoms
  - Fever/myalgia/
  - arthralgia







# Severe Dysuria

- Adenovirus
- Seasonal variation
- Sudden onset
- Meatitis++
- Discharge
- Inguinal lymphadenopathy +/-
- Conjunctivitis +/-
- Preceded or concurrent constitutional symptoms



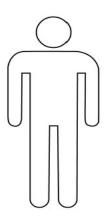






### STI tool

#### Men with urethral irritation, dysuria and/or discharge



- First-void urine -15-20 ml only - for chlamydia, gonococcal and Mycoplasma genitalium NAAT testing.
- Swab of discharge (if present) for bacterial (gonococcal) culture



Does NOT have to be early morning specimen, and time since previous urination is irrelevant.



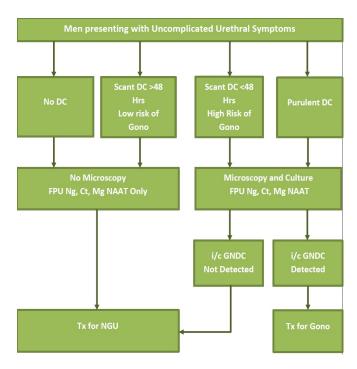
Swab of discharge is sufficient; doesn't have to be a urethral swab.

### Investigations

- FPU (or Urethral Swab) for NAAT
  - N.gonorrhoea
  - C.trachomatis
  - M.genitalium (+Macrolide Resistance Mutation(MRM)
- If gonorrhoea is suspected
  - Smear of Ur DC for Grams Stain Microscopy, plus
    - Gonococcal mcs











- 26 year old man presents with urethral discharge
- Discharge and dysuria, which started 2 days after having condomless IAS with a casual male partner
- Nil other symptoms
- · On Examination...
  - Purulent discharge
  - Redness at meatus/urethral tip
  - Nil lesions/blisters/ulcers/rashes

What could it be?







- · Before FPU is collected
  - Smear urethral discharge for mcs
  - Gonococcal MC&S
- FPU for Ng/Ct NAAT
- FPU for Mg PCR and MRM
- Pharyngeal and anal swab for Ng/Ct NAAT
- Serology for HIV and Syphilis





Test: Ur Micro

PMNs: ++++ Epi Cells: Positive

Comments:

Bacteria List: GNDC (intracellular), GNDC (extracellular)

Bacteria Comments:







- high suspicion of gonorrhoea:
  - purulent discharge
  - onset within soon after exposure
  - MSM or overseas traveller



### Results

- HIV: negative
- Syphilis: negative
- TH Ng/Ct :negative
- FPU Ct : negative
- FPU Ng Positive
- Gonococcal Culture:
- N.gonorrhoea Isolated, + sensitivity report



- Diagnosis
  - Gonococcal urethritis
- Treatment
  - Azithromycin 1g oral once with food
  - Ceftriaxone 500mg with 2ml lignocaine 1% IMI once
  - No sex x 7 days
- Contact trace Inform all partners and advise them of the treatment needed:
  - Let Them Know website http://letthemknow.org.au/





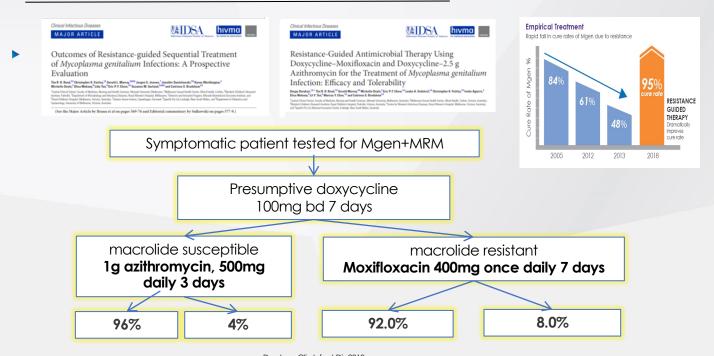
## Resistance-guided Therapy for MG

- Resistance assays have enabled us to move towards individualized therapy
- ► Sequenced resistance-guided strategy for Mgen<sup>1,2</sup>, has
  - increased first line cure for macrolide-susceptible infections
  - increased cure of macrolide-resistant infections
  - reduced de novo macrolide resistance from 12% with 1g to 3%





### Resistance-guided Therapy for MG









# Options for macrolide-resistant MG when moxifloacin has failed

- Re-purposed pristinamycin and minocycline
- Pristinamycin 1g tds with 100mg doxy bd or 1g qid for 10 days<sup>1,2</sup>
  - 75% cure, proportion cured did not vary between regimens (p = 0.91)
- Minocycline 100mg twice daily for 14 days
  - 71% cure<sup>2</sup>
- Combination doxycycline+sitafloxacin
  - · 100mg twice daily, 7 days
  - high cure 92% 3

<sup>1</sup>Read Emerg Infect Dis 2018, <sup>2</sup>Doyle Open Forum Infect Dis 2020 <sup>3</sup>Durukan On demand #87; Emerg Infect Dis 2020





### New antimicrobial candidates

- Pleuromutilin, lefamulin binds to 50S bacterial ribosome, inhibits protein synthesis<sup>1</sup>
  - · active in vitro against GC, CT and Mgen
- Zoliflodacin (Entasis Therapeutics, GARDP)
  - Investigational DNA gyrase/ topoisomerase inhibitor
  - · active in vitro against GC and Mgen
- Gepotidacin (Glaxo-Smith-Kline)
  - · First in "Triazaacenaphthylene" class, targets DNA Gyrase/Topoisomerase IV
  - Different binding site than fluoroquinolones
  - Phase III, for the treatment of uncomplicated urogenital gonorrhea
  - · active in vitro against GC and Mgen

<sup>1</sup> Bradshaw, Jensen and Waites, JID 2017, <sup>2</sup>Paukner Interscience Conference of Antimicrobial Agents and Chemotherapy, 2014



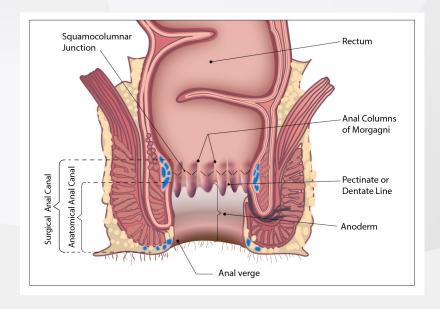


### Anorectal syndrome





# Anatomy





## **Proctitis**

- inflammation of the rectum (i.e. the distal 12 to 15 cm)
- Proctocolitis: symptoms of proctitis, diarrhoea/abdominal cramps and inflammation of the colonic mucosa extending 15cm above the anus
- Enteritis: diarrhoea and abdominal cramping without symptoms of proctitis or proctocolitis



## **Symptoms**

- deep seated anal pain
- PR bleeding
- rectal discharge
- tenesmus
- perianal lumps
- sores/ulcers
- rash
- itch





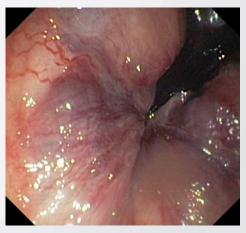
#### **Anal Pain**

- severe pain "throbbing"
- pain on defecation
- fear of defecation
  - constipation
- fever and malaise
- sleep disturbance
- inguinal lymphadenopathy



# Haemorrhoids

- painless bleeding
  - bright and splashed on toilet bowl
- painful when thrombosed
- itch/irritation
- mucoid discharge
- history of constipation
- straining







# Ano-rectal ulcers

- painless or
- extremely painful
- history of trauma
- past history of herpes
- painful defecation
- recent constipation









# Causes

#### STI

- N.gonorrhoea
- C.trachomatis (LGV)
- T.pallidium
- HSV
- M.genitalium

#### Non STI

- inflammatory bowel diseases
  - Crohns
  - Ulcerative collitis
- radiation
- injury
- enemas
- antibiotics and C.difficile





## **Acute Proctitis**

- ano-rectal pain
- passing mucus
  - coating on stools
- rectal bleeding
- tenesmus
  - frequent or continuous urge to have a bowel movement



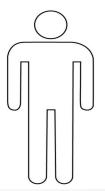
# Clinical Approach

- History
  - symptomology
  - incubation period/ last sexual contact
  - past history
- Examination
  - external anal ulceration/lesion
  - discharge



## STI tool

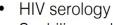
Proctitis in men who have sex with other men



**Inspect** the perianal area and **palpate** the anal canal for ulcers and fissures.

Anorectal swab for NAAT testing:

- chlamydia
- gonococci
- HSV
- syphilis
- Mycoplasma genitalium



- Syphilis serology
- Hepatitis B serology if unvaccinated or known to be not immune
- Hepatitis A serology if unvaccinated or known to be not immune.





# Investigations

- External genital ulceration
  - HSV PCR
  - TP PCR
- Rectal swab -NAAT
  - N.gonorrhoea
  - C.trachomatis
  - HSV PCR
  - TP PCR
- If gonorrhoea is suspected
  - Smear of anal discharge for gram stain microscopy, plus
    - · Gonococcal micro-culture and sensitivities





# Management

- Start treatment before results come back!
- First line is doxycycline 100 mg bd for 7 days plus valaciclovir 500 mg bd for 10 days. If practical, give ceftriaxone 500 mg IM before starting other treatment.
- Call or refer if severe pain or treatment failure.



# Management

- no sex during treatment period
- review in 7 days
- contact tracing
- extended course of doxycline for 21 days if chlamydia positive

➤order LGV serovar



# Case 1

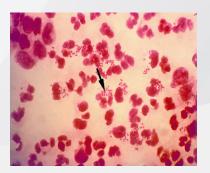
- Samuel
- 26 year old man presents with painful anal discharge
- started 2 days after having condomless receptive anal sex with casual male partner
- no other symptoms
- no history of HSV



# Examination

- purulent discharge on proctoscopy
- no lesions/blisters/ulcers/rashes









#### Case 1

- If high suspicion of gonorrhoea:
  - >purulent discharge
  - onset within a couple of days of possible exposure



## Results

- HIV: negative
- Syphilis: negative
- pharyngeal Ct/Ng :negative
- FPU Ct/Ng : negative
- rectal Ct : negative
- rectal Ng Positive
- N.gonorrhoea isolated on culture
- HSV PCR :negative
- TPPCR: negative



#### Case 1

- diagnosis
  - gonococcal proctitis
- treatment
  - azithromycin 1g oral once with food
  - ceftriaxone 500mg with 2ml lignocaine 1% IMI once
  - no sex x 7 days
- contact trace inform all partners and advise them of the treatment needed
  - Let Them Know website http://letthemknow.org.au/



# History

- 10 days ago had oro-anal sex with RSP male
- last casual male sexual contact more than 3 months ago
- never receptive anal sex
- 100% condoms for anal sex
- no history of HSV
- no history of STIs
- regular STI screens





# Examination





#### Case 2

- If high suspicion of herpes simplex:
  - >systemic illness
  - > recent oral sex

  - onset within a week to 10 days of possible exposure



#### Results

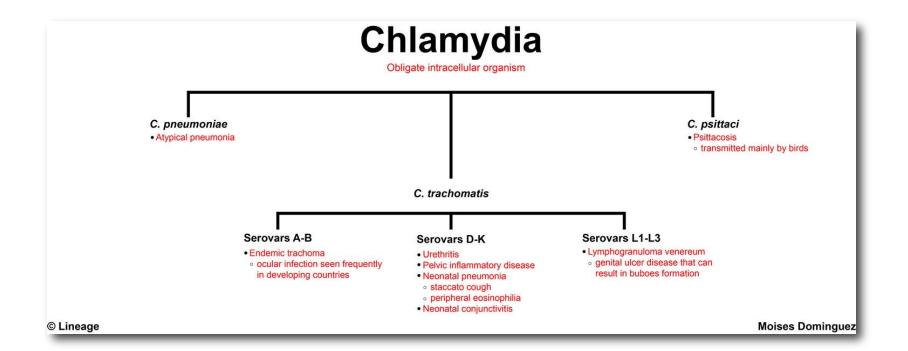
- HIV: negative
- Syphilis: negative
- pharyngeal Ct/Ng :negative
- FPU Ct/Ng : negative
- rectal Ct /Ng: negative
- HSV PCR :positive- Type I
- TPPCR: negative



#### Case 2

- diagnosis
  - HSV I proctitis
- treatment
  - valaclovir 500 mg twice daily x 10 days
  - topical lignocaine
  - episodic vs suppressive treatment







## **LGV**

- Initially endemic in S. and W Africa, India, SEA and Caribbean
- Outbreaks in high income countries- mainly in MSM
- Most present as proctitis
- Majority of MSM with LGV HIV associated
- HIV seropositivity was the strongest risk factor for LGV infection



#### **LGV**

• 3 different stages

#### 1<sup>st</sup> Stage:

- Primary infection- (14-21days):
  - small painless genital papules, pustules, or shallow <u>ulcers</u> appear on the skin
  - ➤ transient, heal quickly and disappear-often go unnoticed or get mistaken for genital herpes.
  - ➤ no accompanying symptoms (usually)



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Stage of LGV

- Secondary infection- 2 to 6 weeks after primary:
  - ➤ painful and swollen lymph glands develop in the groin area. occur on one side (two-thirds of cases) or both sides of the groin
  - buboes can rupture and drain pus
  - ➤ 'groove sign' (guttering along blood vessels) occurs in 15–20% of cases
  - > most male patients present with symptoms during this stage







# 3<sup>rd</sup> Stage:

- Late stage infection:
- deep seated infection can lead to abscess, fistula, lymphatic obstruction, severe genital edema, rectal stricture
- ➤ genital deformation



# Diagnosis

- serology testing is unreliable- low specificity but late stage may be useful (where there is no ulcer to swab)
- NAAT for chlamydia then LGV serovars
- swab from ulcer, buboes aspirate.
- culture is difficult.



# Treatment

- Doxycycline 100 mg bd x 3 weeks -buboes should resolve by 3<sup>rd</sup> week
- alternative Erythromycin(500mg QID) 3 weeks
- Azithromycin 1g weekly for 3 weeks (test of cure needed)
- TOC essential



- buboes may require needle aspiration or incision and drainage to avoid rupture or sinus tract formation
- primarily carried out for symptomatic relief but may aid in diagnosis when pus is sent for NAAT
- aspiration safer than incision and drainage, which are associated with a greater risk of postoperative sinus formation



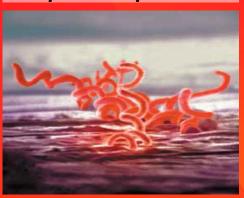
# Syphilis

Treponema pallidum

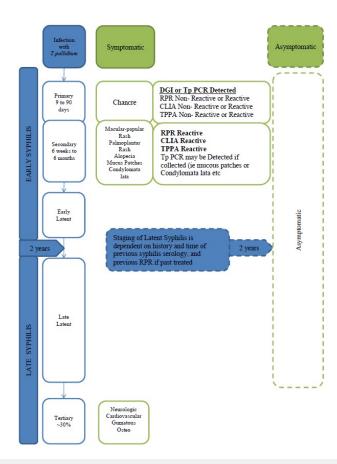


# Syphilis

Treponema pallidum











# Diagnosis – Serologic

- Treponemal specific tests
  - Chemiluminescence Immunoassay (CLIA)
    - IgM/IgG
  - T.pallidium Particle Agglutination Assay (TPPA)
  - T.pallidium Haemagglutination Assay (TPHA)
  - Fluorescent Treponemal Antibody Absorbed (FTA-ABS)



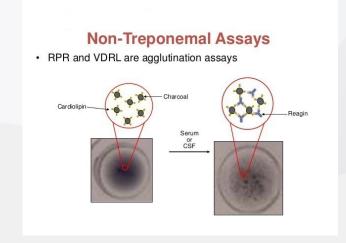
# Diagnosis – Serologic

- Non-treponemal Serologic Tests
  - Rapid Plasma Reagin (RPR) Test
  - Provide a titre, index of disease activity
    - 1:2; 1:4; 1:8; 1:16; 1:32; 1:64; 1:128; 1:256...
  - Biologic false positives
    - Autoimmune Disease, Pregnancy, Viral Infections

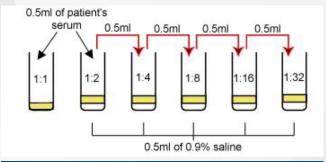


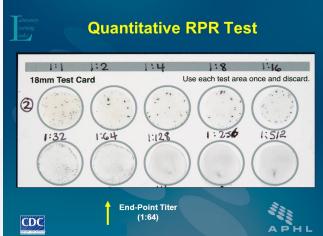
# Non-Treponemal Tests

Rapid Plasma Reagin Test (RPR)





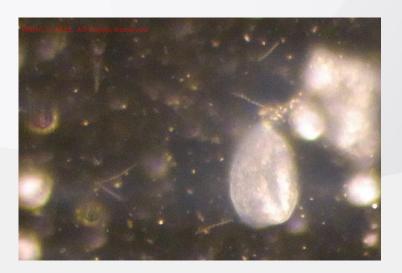






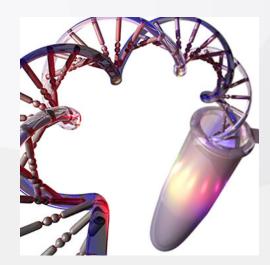
## Diagnosis- Direct Identification

Dark Ground Microscopy



# Diagnosis- Direct Identification

Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR)





# Syphilis Staging

- Early Syphilis (< 2 years)</li>
  - Primary
  - Secondary
  - Early Latent
- Late Syphilis (>2 years)
  - Late Latent
- Latent Syphilis of Unknown Duration



# Syphilis Staging

- Tertiary Syphilis (10-20 years)
  - Neurosyphilis
  - Cardiovascular Syphilis
  - Gummatous Syphilis

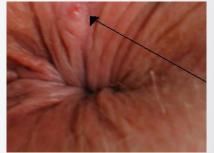
Congenital Syphilis



# Primary Syphilis











### Secondary Syphilis







### Secondary Syphilis









#### Treatment

- Early Syphilis (<2 years)</li>
  - Benzathine Penicillin 2.4 mIU i.m.i once
  - Doxycycline 100mg b.d for 14 days
- Late Syphilis (>2 years or Unknown Duration)
  - Benzathine Penicillin 2.4 mIU i.m.i weekly for 3 weeks
  - Doxycycline 100mg b.d. for 28 days
- It is always preferable to treat with Benzathine penicillin over Doxycycline due to compliance issues.

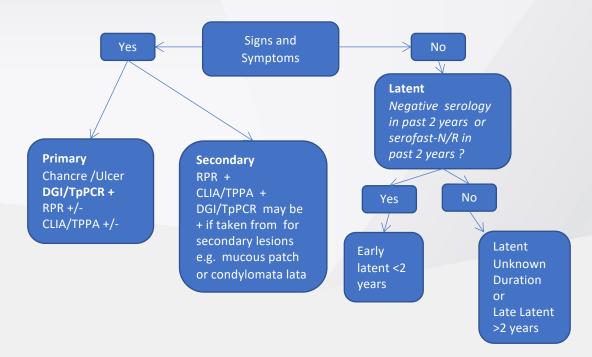


#### Jarisch-Herxheimer Reaction

- Transient flu-like reaction (headache, fever, chills, myalgia) following initiation antimicrobial therapy for syphilis. (within 24 hours)
- Self-limiting (<24 hours)</li>
- Occurs mainly in early syphilis (mostly in secondary)
- Can exacerbate cutaneous syphilis lesions
- Rare in late syphilis
- Rest, paracetamol
- Pathophysiology is not well understood
- Potentially life threatening, inpatient syphilis treatment is recommended in cardio-vascular, neuro-syphilis, ocular syphilis, pregnancy



### **Basic Staging**





### Reinfection

- If asymptomatic
- RPR =/> 4 four fold
- RPR = 2 fold rise
  - parallel testing
  - ☐ Adequate treatment signified by
  - RPR =/< 4 four fold drop in titre



- 29 year old
- MSM
- No symptoms
- First STI screen

Date	CLIA	ТРРА	RPR	DGI	PCR	Sx	Stage	Rx
27-10-17	Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive			ASx	?	?



- 36 year old
- painless penile ulcer x 4 days
- regular STI screening every 3 months

Date	CLIA	ТРРА	RPR	DGI	Tp PCR	Sx	Stage	Rx
12-08-17	Reactive	Reactive	Non- Reactive	Spirochetes Not Detected	Detected	Ulcer		
20-08-17	Reactive	Reactive	1:8					Day of Rx



- 52 year old transgender female
- Multiple partners
- Regular STI screening
- On PREP
- p/h of syphilis
- No symptoms today



Date	CLIA	ТРРА	RPR	DGI	PCR	Sx	Stage	Rx
23-04-16	Non- Reactive					ASx		
12-01-17	Reactive	Reactive	1:4	Spirochetes Detected	Positive	Genital Ulcer	?	?
14-05-17	Reactive	Reactive	Non-Reactive			ASx	?	
22-02-18	Reactive	Reactive	1:256			ASx	?	?
10-06-18	Reactive	Reactive	1:8			ASx	?	
15-2-19	Reactive	Reactive	1:16			ASx	?	?



- 46 year old female
- Recently returned traveller
- Last STI screen 3 years ago
- Treated as a syphilis contact in UK





- Very stressed
- No job and couch surfing
- Recurrent cold sores and mouth ulcers







Date	CLIA	ТРРА	RPR	DGI	Tp PCR	Sx	Stage
25-09-16	Reactive	Reactive	1:32			ASx	?
28-03-17	Reactive	Reactive	1:2			ASx	?
18-04-20	Reactive	Reactive	1:256		Detected	White Patches- Tongue	?

