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Syphilis

National Cancer Institute

Source

National Cancer Institute. *Syphilis*. NCI Thesaurus. Code C35055.

A contagious bacterial infection caused by the spirochete *Treponema pallidum*. It is a sexually transmitted disorder, although it can also be transmitted from the mother to the fetus in utero. Typically, it is initially manifested with a single sore which heals without treatment. If the infection is left untreated, the initial stage is followed by skin rash and mucous membrane lesions. A late stage follows, which is characterized by damage of the internal organs, including the nervous system.