

New & Noteworthy

February Newsletter The Dogs Are Talking Monthly Dispatch February, 2008

Some of our informal research at Dogs Are Talking reveals that many San Francisco men aren't familiar with the symptoms of syphilis. We thought a refresher course would be in order, and offer it to our readers in the hopes that it helps prevent the spread of a few unwanted tokens of affection this Valentine's Day—and throughout the year.

Dutch, our favorite Dalmation (casting call participant number 52), also expounds on the symptoms of syphilis in our most recent ad. Remember, if you discover any symptoms, you should go straight to the San Francisco City Clinic at 356 7th Street. And readers should remember: all gay and bisexual men with multiple sex partners should get tested for syphilis every 3–6 months, regardless of whether or not they notice anything out of the ordinary.

Signs and Symptoms

Syphilis presents itself gradually, in several phases referred to as primary, secondary, latent and tertiary (or late) stages.

Primary Stage

Symptoms usually show up 10–90 days after exposure. Possible early symptoms include a painless sore called a chancre (shank-er) and swollen glands near the sore. Syphilis sores do go away without treatment, leaving the patient symptom-free but still infected with the disease. Chancres also makes HIV transmission much easier.

Secondary Stage

Within 4–12 weeks of infection, patients usually notice a non-itchy rash on the body, the hands and the soles of the feet. Other symptoms may include patchy hair loss, fever and grey or white spots in moist areas of the body. Again, these symptoms may go away if left untreated, but infection is still present.

Latent Stage

There are usually no symptoms during the latent stage of the disease. Infection can only be detected through a blood test. Patients who go untreated during this stage may still be cured of infection. However, some people with latent syphilis do progress to the final stage of the disease.

Tertiary (Late) Stage

Left untreated, syphilis infection can cause brain damage, heart disease and other long-term health problems.

For more information about syphilis, including photos, please [click here](#).

Is Your House in Order?

Being Well and Loving Yourself: A Gay Men's Wellness Event

Thursday, February 21st
4:30–7:30 PM
LGBT Center
1800 Market Street
San Francisco

Come and chat with many of our community's health and wellness partners about taking care of ourselves as gay men.

Topics include: · alternative health · community involvement · exercise · living well · medical health · mental health · nutrition · sexual health · spirituality · substance use

Incredible door prizes, refreshments and entertainment! For more information, please call 415.554.9031.

This event is held in collaboration among the SFDPH STD Prevention and Control Division, the HIV Prevention and Research Sections of the AIDS Office and the LGBT Center.

Help Spread the Word

Remember, if you like a particular poster or you know the perfect spot for it, please don't hesitate to download it from our website. All our posters are available to be downloaded at any time, and we want you to hang them up all over town—don't let any wall space go to waste! Help us remind gay and bisexual men to get tested for syphilis.

Dogs Are Talking Seeks New Community Partners in 2008

Do you have access to an audience within your neighborhood or community? Or would you just like to help us get the word out? Either way, we hope you will consider becoming a community partner or a Dogs Are Talking campaign sponsor. We plan to strengthen our campaign by increasing community participation over the year ahead. If we all work together, we can get rid of syphilis in San Francisco. Give Promotions West a call at 415.255.0800 or send an email to info@dogsaretalking.com. We'd love to hear from you today.

Newsletter Archive: August, September, October, November, December, January

Contact us at info@dogsaretalking.com

[STDtest.org](http://stdtest.org) | sfcityclinic.org | 415.487.5580

