

Congenital Syphilis in NYC

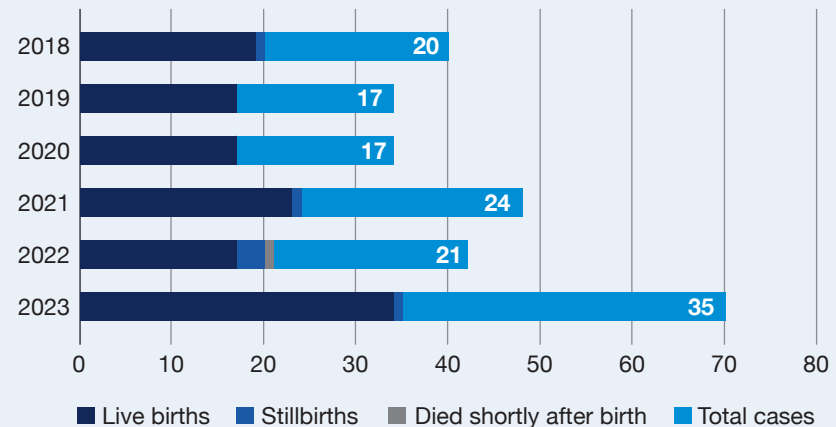
A pregnant patient with syphilis can pass the infection to the fetus during pregnancy, resulting in congenital syphilis. Congenital syphilis can have devastating health outcomes, including stillbirth, preterm birth, and early infant death.

Congenital syphilis data



Congenital syphilis is a major public health concern nationally and in NYC. According to provisional national data, congenital syphilis case counts were 7.5 times higher in 2024 than they were in 2023.¹ NYC has faced rising levels of congenital syphilis since 2018. In 2024, there were 37 cases of congenital syphilis in NYC, including one stillbirth and one infant who was born alive and then died soon after. This increase in cases continued even as reported syphilis among females in NYC declined, with a 7% decrease in case numbers in 2024 compared with 2023. In NYC in 2024, most female cases (78%) were among people reported as Black (27%) and Latina (51%), and 50% of cases were among individuals age 30 or younger.

Reported Congenital Syphilis Case Numbers by Vital Status, NYC, 2018 to 2023

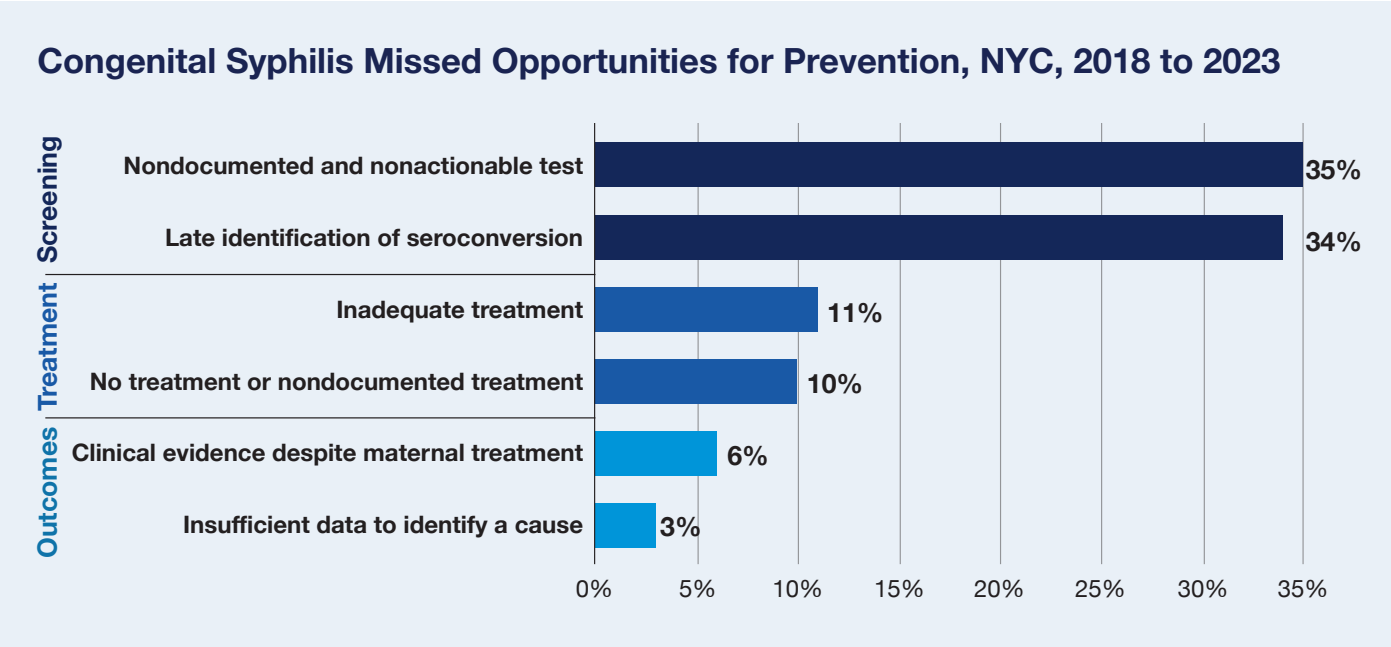


¹Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Sexually transmitted infections surveillance 2023. Table 5: congenital syphilis — reported cases and rates of reported cases by year of birth, by state/territory and region in alphabetical order, United States. https://www.cdc.gov/sti-statistics/media/pdfs/2025/09/2023_STI_Surveillance_Report_FINAL_508.pdf

Increases in congenital syphilis in NYC correspond to a previous rise in syphilis among people reported as female. From 2022 to 2023, syphilis diagnoses among females increased by 6%. Most female cases in 2023 were among people reported as Black (32%) and Latina (45%), and 48% of cases were among people under 30.

Congenital syphilis prevention

Timely syphilis screening and treatment can prevent congenital syphilis. Among all congenital syphilis cases diagnosed between 2018 and 2023, missed opportunities for screening² were identified in approximately 70% of cases; missed opportunities for treatment were identified in approximately 20% of cases. These missed opportunities include lack of timely syphilis testing, delayed diagnosis, inadequate or no treatment, and instances where congenital syphilis occurred despite documented treatment, which may reflect possible treatment failure.



²McDonald R, O’Callaghan K, Torrone E, et al. Vital Signs: missed opportunities for preventing congenital syphilis — United States, 2022. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep.* 2023;72(46):1269-1274. doi:10.15585/mmwr.mm7246e1