

Syphilis Encyclopedia Article

Syphilis

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.

Contents

Syphilis Encyclopedia Article.....	1
Contents.....	2
Syphilis.....	3

Syphilis

A sexually transmitted disease that, if untreated, can cause permanent damage to the heart and central nervous system.

Syphilis is a **sexually transmitted disease** (STDs) caused by an organism called *Treponema pallidum*. The incidence of syphilis among adolescents has risen dramatically in recent years, yet because most adolescents infected with syphilis have no symptoms, the growing nature of the problem is not obvious. Syphilis is spread by sexual intercourse, by kissing, and by touching infected sores. Left untreated, syphilis can cause serious permanent damage to the **heart** and to the central nervous system. For these reasons, all sexually active adolescents should be routinely screened for syphilis with a blood test called VDRL or **RPR**.

At the onset of infection, a painless sore called a chancre sometimes appears, usually in the genital area. If an adolescent infected with syphilis develops a chancre, it will disappear in a few weeks even without treatment. The disease, however, will continue to progress.

Syphilis is treated with penicillin or another **antibiotic**, either injected or by mouth. All sexual partners should also be tested for syphilis, and an adolescent being treated for syphilis should abstain from sexual activity. Follow-up blood tests should be performed every three months to confirm that the cure is complete.

For Further Study

Organizations

National Sexually Transmitted Disease Hotline
Telephone: toll-free (800) 227-8922
(Free information and clinic referrals)

Books

Daugirdas, John T., M.D.

STD, Sexually Transmitted Diseases,

Including HIV/AIDS.

Hinsdale, IL: Medtext, 1992.