



SEXUALLY TRANSMITTED INFECTIONS, HIV/AIDS

## **SYPHILIS: A CLINICAL-EPIDEMIOLOGICAL STUDY IN THE POPULATION OF STD CENTER IN MILAN BETWEEN 2015 AND 2017**

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**Introduction:** Syphilis is an infectious venereal disease and is usually described in terms of disease stage. Primary syphilis generally presents with the typical chancre while second stage is highly polymorphic; it can involve skin, mucous membranes and internal organs. Tertiary syphilis is nowadays extremely rare.

**Objective:** Aim of this study is to assess epidemiological characteristics (gender, age, sexual behaviour and geographical origin) of patients diagnosed with syphilis. Moreover, we evaluate the clinical presentation of this disease in the same cohort of patients, including possible co-infections.

**Materials and methods:** We carried out a retrospective observational study on patients with syphilis diagnosed at the STD Centre in Milan between 2015 and 2017.

**Results:** Syphilis is the most common entity among Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), with a mean age of incidence of 35 years.. Italian people are more affected, followed by South American. Primary syphilis is most often associated with a single chancre, commonly found on the external genitalia. Secondary syphilis and late latent syphilis are the most frequently diagnosed, with roseola as the prevalent clinical feature; other symptoms, such as oral lesions, alopecia, systemic and ocular involvement are very rare. Few patients reveal co-infections, with a prevalence of HIV infections in men who have sex with men (MSM).

**Conclusions:** According to the literature, incidence of syphilis is related to the poor use of condom and to the number of sexual partners. The presence of asymptomatic syphilis in 43.8% of cases suggest the importance of periodical serological test, particularly, in patients at risk of STDs. Considering co-infections rates (6.2% of cases), a complete venereological screening should be performed. It is therefore considered essential to strengthen the network of epidemiological surveillance centres and to promote multidisciplinary team approach and governmental activities in order to stem the progressive increase in sexually transmitted infections.

