



XXI. DISEASES OF THE FEMALE GENITAL SYSTEM

Syphilis (chancre)	
<i>Vulva:</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shows a chancre
	<p><i>The chancre:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears at the right labium majus • Is solitary and small (2 cm. in diameter) • Almost rounded or slightly ovoid in shape • Shallow (button-like) • With a clean base
	
<p>N.B.:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vulva and cervix are common sites for the characteristic lesion of the primary stage of syphilis; but, in the vulva, the chancre is not so missed as in the cervix. • Occasionally, and due to contact-infection, two lesions occur on both labia minora. • The chancre begins as a single, slightly-elevated, firm-to-hard papule (indurated and painless), which appears from 2-6 weeks after infection. • It is associated with painless enlargement of the regional lymph nodes without suppuration except after superimposed secondary bacterial infection. • The diagnosis is proved by clinical examination, history of sex-contact and detection of spirochaetes (<i>Treponema pallida</i>) on examination of the scrapings of the chancre (or the fluid aspirated from the enlarged regional lymph nodes) by dark ground illumination, as well as, by a positive Wasserman-reaction when healing takes place one month from chancre-development. 	
	



Syphilis (secondary stage)

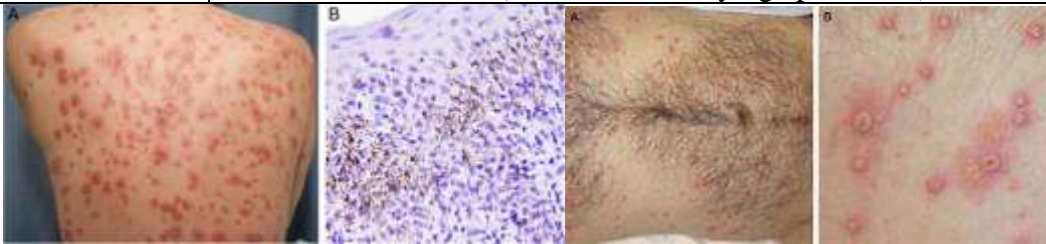
Vulva: • Shows muco-cutaneous lesions (rashes and condylomata).

Rashes (eruptions):

- Appear in the skin area around vulva
- Are extending to the thighs
- Bilateral in distribution and of different sizes
- Maculopapular in form
- Some are coppery; others are reddish brown in colour

Condyloma lata:

- Appear at vulva and at peri-anal region
- Moderately-large in size
- Rounded and elevated broad plaques (flat papules)
- Smooth-surfaced (with intact overlying epithelium)



N.B.:

- Skin eruptions, mucous patches and condyloma lata are some manifestations of the secondary stage of syphilis that appear 1–3 months after the primary lesion (chancre).
- The common sites are at (and in between the vulva, peri-anal and perineal regions).
- **The skin-eruptions are symmetrical, polymorphic (several varieties i.e. macular, papular pustular, follicular, annular and scaly), non-destructive, and with a coppery pigmentation.**
- The mucous patches appear deeper in the vagina); and, are flat superficial snail-track-like ulcers. The condyloma lata are large flat papules that occur at moist situations and are very infective,

The Stages of Syphilis

Primary



The chancre lesion is the hallmark of primary syphilis. It may appear 10-90 days after exposure. Common sites include penis and labia. Other sites include anus, oral mucosa. Without treatment, chancre disappears in 2-8 weeks.

Secondary

Rash, pink to brown macules. Involves palms/soles in 50% of cases.



Oral lesions called "mucous patches" resembling snail tracks.



Ocular syphilis manifestations including anterior or posterior uveitis.

Symptomatic early neurosyphilis, cranial nerve deficits and/or aseptic meningitis presentation.



Genito-inguinal rashes, including tinea-mimicker or heaped-up wart-like lesions called condyloma lata.

Less common internal organ manifestations including acute hepatitis and nephrotic syndrome.



Latent

Latent syphilis refers to asymptomatic infection after the period of primary and secondary syphilis (noticed or unnoticed) has passed.

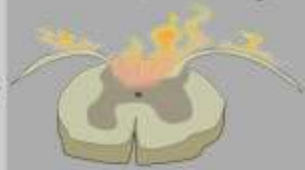
Early Latent

Early latent refers to asymptomatic patients with positive testing, in whom history can confirm exposure to or symptoms of primary or secondary syphilis within the last year. This is group may receive single-dose penicillin like primary or secondary.

Late Latent

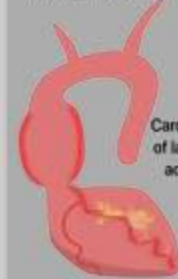
Late latent patients have positive serology but do not meet criteria for early. Thus, multiple doses of penicillin.

Late (Tertiary)



Late Neurosyphilis, including tabes dorsalis, gait impairments, and dementia. Tabes dorsalis damages the dorsal columns and sensory nerve roots, causing a syndrome of pain and sensory deficits similar to those of B12 deficiency.

Gumma are ulcerating granulomas on skin, bone, and internal organs.



Cardiovascular effects of late syphilis include aortic aneurysm and coronary arteritis.