

**What is chancroid?**

Chancroid, also called soft chancre, is a sexually transmitted disease (STD) caused by bacteria called *Haemophilis ducreyi*. It is common in tropical countries, but rare in other parts of the world.

**Who gets chancroid?**

Any person who has sex can be infected with chancroid. It is more commonly seen in men than in women, particularly in uncircumcised males.

**What are the symptoms of chancroid?**

The first sign of infection is usually the appearance of one or more sores or raised bumps on the genital organs. They are surrounded by a narrow red border which soon becomes filled with pus and eventually ruptures, leaving a painful open sore. In 50 percent of untreated cases, the chancroid bacteria infect the lymph nodes in the groin. Within 5 to 10 days of the appearance of primary sores, the glands on one side (or both sides) of the groin become enlarged, hard and painful and may eventually rupture.

**How soon do symptoms appear?**

Symptoms usually appear four to seven days after exposure.

**For how long can an infected person carry the bacteria?**

An individual remains infectious as long as there are open sores present on the body.

**How is chancroid spread?**

The infection is spread through sexual contact with open or runny sores of infected people. The bacteria are more likely to invade the sexual organs at the site of a small cut or scratch.

**What is the treatment for chancroid?**

Antibiotics are effective in treating the disease, with the sores healing in about two weeks.

**How can chancroid be prevented?**

Not having sex is the only sure way to avoid getting chancroid. Otherwise, limiting the number of one's sexual partners reduces the chance of being exposed. Using condoms correctly with all partners will decrease the possibility of becoming infected with chancroid or any other STD. If you think you are infected, avoid any sexual contact until you have visited a doctor, hospital or STD clinic. If you are infected, notify your sex partners immediately so they can be tested and treated.

**If you have any Other questions on HIV/AIDS or any sexually transmitted disease, please call the Virginia STD/AIDs Hotline: (800) 533 - 4148**