



**TO:** Logan County Residents

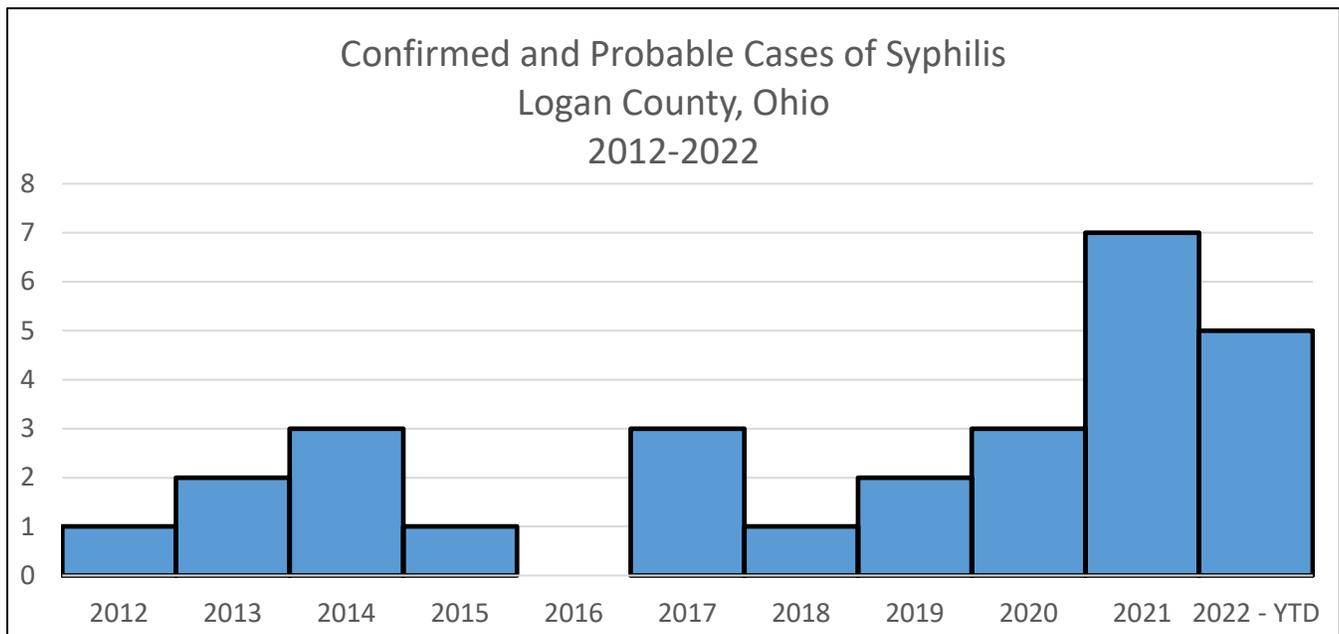
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**CONTACT:** Travis Irvan, MPH, Health Commissioner – (937) 651-6211

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

One of Logan County Health District's (LCHD's) main functions is to protect the public from infectious diseases, which includes sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) that can be harmful to reproductive health. LCHD monitors these reportable diseases through screening, testing, case investigation, case education, and case follow-up.

Recently, there has been an increase in Logan County's syphilis cases, with five (5) cases being reported so far in 2022. This follows a similar increase in 2021 when seven (7) cases were reported. From 2012-2020, Logan County averaged less than two (2) cases per year. Because of this continued increase in syphilis cases, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has classified Logan County as having a syphilis outbreak. Syphilis has been on the rise in Ohio for a few years now and was typically seen in the larger, more metropolitan and urban areas of the state. However, during the last two (2) years, increases in syphilis cases have been seen more in Ohio's rural areas, and Logan County is not the only rural area seeing an increase nor the only rural area being classified as having an outbreak by ODH.



The Ohio Department of Health shares: *Syphilis is an STD caused by bacteria, passed from person to person through direct contact with a syphilitic sore called a "chancre." These chancres typically occur on the external genitals, vagina, anus, or in the rectum, but can also occur on the lips and in the mouth. Transmission occurs during vaginal, anal, or oral sex. Pregnant women with the disease can transmit it through the placenta to the fetus or at birth to the child. There are multiple stages of syphilis infection with different signs and symptoms for each stage. Many people infected with syphilis do not have any symptoms for years, yet remain at risk for late complications if untreated.*

Syphilis is treatable with antibiotics, but because symptoms in the primary and secondary stages of infection are often painless and go unnoticed, transmission of the disease without knowledge of its existence is probable. If left untreated, the disease can spread to the brain, nervous system, eyes, and ears.

Locally, no specific demographic group is seeing an increase in syphilis, which is why it's important to know your sexual partners and discuss sexual history before engaging in any sexual activities. Other factors such as alcohol and drug use may also increase risky sexual behavior.

Correct and consistent use of latex condoms and regular testing/screening for syphilis can help protect from the spread of the disease. Free condoms can be mailed to Ohio residents aged 16 years and older by requesting them from <https://ohiv.org/free-condoms/>. Free condoms are also available in LCHD's office by requesting to speak with a nurse.

If you are experiencing signs or symptoms of syphilis or other STD, contact your healthcare provider. If you do not have a healthcare provider, contact LCHD at (937) 592-9040 and ask to speak with a nurse who can provide additional information and answer questions you may have.

Read more on syphilis from the Ohio Department of Health [here](#), or the Center for Disease Control and Prevention [here](#).