Chancroid

What is it?

Chancroid is a bacterial disease that is spread only through sexual contact. Uncircumcised men are at much higher risk than circumcised men for getting chancroid from an infected partner. Chancroid is a risk factor for the HIV virus.

The disease can also be spread when pus-like fluid from the ulcer is moved to other parts of the body or to another person by contact such as touch.

What are the symptoms?

- Symptoms usually occur within 4-10 days from exposure. They rarely develop earlier than three days or later than 10 days.
- The ulcer begins as a tender, elevated bump, and then becomes a pus-filled, open sore with ragged edges.
- The ulcer is soft to the touch (unlike a syphilis chancre that is hard or rubbery). The term soft chancre is frequently used to describe the chancroid sore.
- The ulcers can be very painful in men but women are often unaware of them.
- Because chancroid is often asymptomatic in women, they may be unaware of the lesion(s).
- Painful lymph glands may occur in the groin, usually only on one side; but they can occur on both sides.

How serious is it?

Untreated chancroid often results in ulcers occurring on the genitals. Sometimes the ulcers persist for weeks or months.

How is it diagnosed?

Diagnosis is made by isolating the bacteria *Hemophilus ducreyi* in a culture from a genital ulcer. The chancre is often confused with syphilis, herpes or lymphogranuloma venereum; therefore, it is important that your health care provider rule these diseases out.
How is it treated?

Chancroid may be successfully treated with certain antibiotics. Lesions and ulcers can be expected to heal within two weeks.

What about my partner?

Chancroid is contagious as long as the infected person has any open sores. The open sores contain bacteria and any contact with these sores can result in infection.

For more information about STDs, talk to your health care provider or call:

The State of Tennessee HIV/STD Hotline: 1-800-525-2437

(Monday through Friday 8:00 to 4:30 p.m. CST)

OR

The CDC National STD Hotline: 1-800-227-8922

Other Informational Links:

American Social Health Association
http://www.ashastd.org/

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
http://www.cdc.gov/STD/

E-Cards, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/index.asp?category=174

Get Yourself Tested
http://www.gytnow.org/

National Institute of Health Medline

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
http://www.womenshealth.gov/faq/sexually-transmitted-infections.cfm

World Health Organization
http://www.who.int/topics/sexually_transmitted_infections/en/