



Health Advisory:

Penicillin G Benzathine (Bicillin L-A) Shortage

May 18, 2023

Situational Update: Bicillin L-A

The CDC has received reports that some clinical providers and public health departments are currently unable to procure enough penicillin G benzathine (Bicillin L-A) to treat syphilis cases in their jurisdictions due to a manufacturing backlog. The manufacturer anticipates the issue will be resolved by Quarter 4 of 2023. The manufacturer is working closely with the CDC and FDA to address urgent requests.

Bicillin L-A is the only acceptable treatment for pregnant people infected with or exposed to syphilis and should be prioritized for babies exposed to syphilis in utero. Additionally, all people *capable* of pregnancy diagnosed with syphilis should receive Bicillin L-A.

Among non-pregnant adults, doxycycline 100 mg PO BID x 14 days is an acceptable alternative for those with primary, secondary, or early latent syphilis, and for those who have been exposed to a patient with infectious syphilis. Doxycycline 100 mg PO BID x 28 days is an acceptable alternative for those with late latent syphilis.

Other intramuscular formulations of penicillin (e.g. Bicillin C-R) are *not* acceptable alternatives for the treatment of syphilis.

Actions Requested of SF Clinicians

- 1. Prioritize penicillin G benzathine (Bicillin L-A) for pregnant people and people capable of pregnancy with syphilis infection or exposure**, as well as for non-pregnant syphilis patients with primary, secondary, or early latent syphilis who are unlikely to adhere to a multi-day doxycycline regimen or who have a contraindication to doxycycline.
- 2. Contact SF City Clinic** at (628) 217-7663 if you are having trouble obtaining Bicillin L-A.
- 3. If your stocks of Bicillin L-A are low, consider doxycycline for non-pregnant adults** who are likely to adhere to a multi-day regimen.
- 4. Conserve Bicillin L-A by using alternative drugs** to treat group A strep pharyngitis and for primary rheumatic fever prophylaxis, e.g. penicillin V, amoxicillin, and azithromycin.
- 5. Check for updates** on the [SF City Clinic website](#).

Additional Resources: Bicillin L-A

- [CDC announcements about the Bicillin L-A shortage](#)



- [FDA on Bicillin L-A shortage](#)
- [CDC STI Treatment Guidelines for Syphilis](#)

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