



Gavin Newsom
Mayor

Mitchell H. Katz, MD
Director of Health

**To: Chiefs of Departments, Divisions and Services
San Francisco Hospitals**

**From: Jeffrey D. Klausner, MD, MPH
STD Control Officer**

Re: Treatment of Neurosyphilis

Date: November 23, 2005

In parallel with increases in syphilis in San Francisco, we have observed increases in neurosyphilis. On average there have been 1 or 2 new cases of neurosyphilis each month in San Francisco. Neurosyphilis is a serious disease which may result in permanent neurologic sequelae.

While the clinical evidence for treatment recommendations is limited, please remember that the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and we at the San Francisco Department of Public Health recommend 10-14 days of intravenous therapy with penicillin G 4 million units q 4 hours *FOLLOWED immediately by penicillin G benzathine 2.4 MU intramuscular at least once*. Some experts recommend to repeat weekly for up to 2 additional weeks (3 doses total) after completion of intravenous therapy. *Treponema pallidum* the etiologic agent of syphilis is a slowly metabolizing organism; it is felt that the additional penicillin G benzathine after intravenous therapy is necessary to assure improved likelihood of cure.

More information about syphilis management and indications for CSF analysis can be found at www.sfcityclinic.org/providers.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jeffrey D. Klausner".

Jeffrey D. Klausner, MD, MPH
Deputy Health Officer

Director