

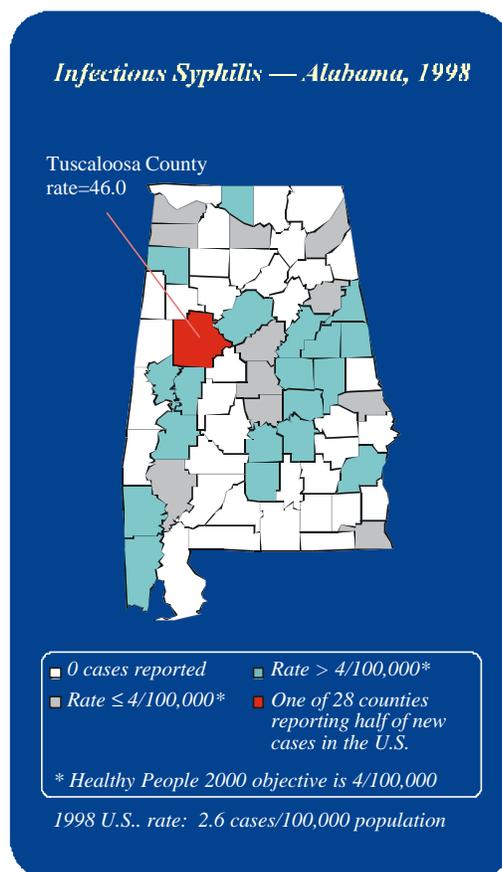
# Eliminating Syphilis Tuscaloosa County, Alabama

## Why is Syphilis Elimination in the U.S. within our reach now?

- Syphilis is a preventable and curable sexually transmitted disease (STD).
- Infectious syphilis is at the lowest rate ever reported: 2.6 cases/100,000 population (6,993 total cases).
- Syphilis is now very concentrated; half of all new cases in 1998 were reported from only 28 counties, which represent less than 1% of all U.S. counties.
- Other industrialized countries have already eliminated syphilis.

## Why is it Important to Eliminate Syphilis in Tuscaloosa County?

- **In 1998 Tuscaloosa County ranked 17<sup>th</sup> in the nation** in new cases of infectious syphilis (74 cases) and had a rate nearly 18 times higher than the national rate.
- **To reduce one of the most glaring racial disparities in health**
  - S 81% of cases are among African Americans (79% of cases nationally).
  - S The infectious syphilis rate in Tuscaloosa County for African Americans is 11 times greater than the rate for white Americans.
- **To decrease spread of HIV infection**
  - S Syphilis increases HIV transmission at least 2-to-5 fold.
- **To improve infant health**
  - S Syphilis can be transmitted from mother to fetus during pregnancy causing stillbirths or congenital infection, some of which may result in persistent health problems.
  - S In 1998, 2 cases of congenital syphilis were reported from Tuscaloosa County for a rate of 92.6 cases/100,000 births, greater than 4 times the national rate of 20.6 cases/100,000 births.



## Tuscaloosa County Responds

- Stillman College, a local historically black college, partners with Tuscaloosa County Health Department to provide educational presentations and community screenings.
- The Tuscaloosa County Health Department extended its STD clinic hours from three to five days a week.
- The local Sheriff's Department, in conjunction with the local STD program, conducts STD educational presentations and offers syphilis screening to individuals requesting services in jail.

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