

SHIGELLOSIS

Reportable to local or state health department

Consult the health department before posting/distributing Parent/Guardian fact sheet.

CAUSE	<i>Shigella</i> bacteria.
SYMPTOMS	Diarrhea (may be watery), fever, stomach cramps, nausea, or vomiting. Stools may contain blood or mucus. Infected persons may have mild symptoms or may not have any symptoms at all. Illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days.
SPREAD	<i>Shigella</i> bacteria leave the body through the stool of an infected person and enter another person when hands, food, or objects (such as toys) contaminated with stool are placed in the mouth. Spread can occur when people do not wash their hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
INCUBATION	It takes from 1 to 7 days, usually 2 to 4 days, from the time a person is exposed until symptoms start.
CONTAGIOUS PERIOD	As long as <i>Shigella</i> bacteria are present in the stool, a person can pass the germs on to other people. For some children, the bacteria can be found in the stool up to 4 weeks after illness.
EXCLUSION	<p><u>Childcare</u>: Until 24 hours after treatment with antibiotics has been started and diarrhea has stopped. Children who have <i>Shigella</i> in their stools but do not have symptoms may need to be treated, but do not need to be excluded.</p> <p><u>School</u>: None, unless the child is not feeling well and/or has diarrhea and needs to use the bathroom frequently. Exclusion may be necessary during outbreaks.</p> <p>Everyone with <i>Shigella</i> should not use swimming beaches, pools, spas, water parks, or hot tubs until 2 weeks after diarrhea has stopped.</p> <p>Staff infected with <i>Shigella</i> bacteria may be restricted from working in food service. Call your local health department to see if these restrictions apply.</p>
DIAGNOSIS	Recommend parents/guardians call their healthcare provider if their child has symptoms of shigellosis. There is a lab test to detect <i>Shigella</i> in the stool.
TREATMENT	If <i>Shigella</i> bacteria are found, antibiotic treatment is available. Children and staff in childcare settings should be treated. <i>Shigella</i> bacteria can be resistant to one or more antibiotics. Ampicillin is not a recommended treatment. Vomiting and diarrhea may lead to dehydration, which may be a medical emergency. Ask a healthcare provider how to prevent dehydration.

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PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after using the toilet and changing diapers and before preparing or eating food. **Thorough handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.** Staff should closely monitor handwashing of all children after children have used the bathroom or have been diapered.
- Discourage self-service food items in the school cafeteria (i.e., salad bars, trays of fruit, trays of desserts) and in the classroom. An adult should serve children their lunches and group snacks.
- DO NOT allow children to swallow water when swimming in lakes, swimming pools, hot tubs, water parks, or fountains.
- Clean and disinfect diapering area and potty chairs after each use and bathroom toilets, sinks, and toys at least daily and when soiled. (See pgs 34-36.)
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled. (See pgs 34-36.)

For more information, call your school nurse.