



Shigellosis

Shigella

What is shigellosis?

Shigellosis is an infection of the gut caused by the bacterium, *Shigella*.

What are the symptoms of an infection with *Shigella* bacteria?

People infected with *Shigella* may have mild to severe diarrhea, fever, and painful bloody, mucus stools. Some infected people may not have any symptoms.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Diarrhea may appear 12 to 96 hours after infection, but usually within 24 to 72 hours.

How is *Shigella* spread?

Shigella is found in the stool (poop) of an infected person. It is very easily spread by close contact with an infected person or eating contaminated food or drinking contaminated water. Once one person in the family is ill it is common for other family members to become ill.

Who gets shigellosis?

Anyone can get shigellosis. Young children, especially those in child care centers, or living in crowded conditions, are infected more often.

What is the treatment?

Most people will recover without treatment. People with severe diarrhea, especially small children and elderly people, should see a doctor.

Do infected people need to be excluded from school, work, or child care?

Since *Shigella* is found in the stool (poop), and is easily spread, people with diarrhea should not go to child care, school, or work. Food handlers, child care employees, and health care providers, need two negative stool tests after diarrhea stops before they can return to work. Child care attendees may return 48 hours after resolution of diarrhea or 24 hours after treatment with antibiotics has started AND 24 hours after diarrhea stops.

How can you prevent the spread of these bacteria?

It is important to practice good handwashing with soap and running water for no less than 15 seconds. For detailed information on hand washing please visit:

<https://wiki.idph.iowa.gov/Portals/3/userfiles/5/Files/Handwashing%20Fact%20sheet.pdf>

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