

Your child may have been exposed to:

## Infectious Diarrhea

Diarrhea is more stools (bowel movements) that are looser and watery when compared to a person's normal pattern and form. Examples of causes include *E. coli* O157:H7, *Salmonella*, and rotavirus.

### If you think your child has Infectious Diarrhea:

- Tell your childcare provider or call the school.
- **Need to stay home?**

#### Childcare:

**Yes**, until diarrhea has stopped. Follow “stay home” guidelines for specific germ if the child was tested and the cause is known.

#### School:

**No**, unless the child is not feeling well and/or has diarrhea and needs to use the bathroom frequently.

### Symptoms

A child with infectious diarrhea may have stools that are loose and runny compared to normal. There may be blood and/or mucus in the stool. Other symptoms may include a stomach ache, vomiting, and fever.

If your child is infected, it may take 1 day to 4 weeks (sometimes longer) for symptoms to start.

### Spread

- By eating or drinking contaminated food or beverages.
- By touching contaminated hands, surfaces, or objects.

### Contagious Period

The illness can spread as long as germs are in the stool.

### Call your Healthcare Provider

- ◆ If anyone in your home has symptoms. There may be a medical test to detect the germ. Treatment may be available, depending on the germ that is causing diarrhea.
- ◆ Ask how to prevent dehydration. Your child may lose a lot of water from vomiting and diarrhea.

### Prevention

- Wash hands after using the toilet and changing diapers and before preparing food or eating. Your child may need help with handwashing
- Clean and disinfect any objects that come in contact with stool. This includes toilets (potty chairs), sinks, toys, and diaper changing areas. Use a product that kills germs.
- DO NOT use beaches, pools, water parks, spas, or hot tubs until 72 hours after diarrhea has stopped.

For more information, call Hennepin County HSPHD-Epidemiology at 612-543-5230 or call your local health department.