



Shigellosis

Reportable to local or state health department.

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

School health and childcare provider information

Cause

Shigella 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. Illness usually lasts 2 to 3 days.

Spread

Shigella 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 1 to 3 days, from the time a person is exposed until symptoms start.

Contagious period

As long as *Shigella* bacteria are present in the stool, a person can pass the bacteria on to other people. For some children, the bacteria can be found in the stool up to 4 weeks after illness.

Exclusion

Childcare: Until 48 hours after diarrhea has stopped **or** until 24 hours after diarrhea has stopped and the child has been on at least 24 hours of antibiotics **or** after one stool culture tests negative for *Shigella*. Children who have *Shigella* in their stools but do not have symptoms may need to be treated, but do not need to be excluded.

School: 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.

Shigellosis

Anyone with *Shigella* should not go in lakes, pools, splash pads, water parks, or hot tubs until 1 week after diarrhea has stopped.

Staff infected with *Shigella* bacteria may be restricted from working in food service. Call your local health department to see if these restrictions apply.

Diagnosis

Recommend parents/guardians call their health care provider if their child has symptoms of shigellosis. There is a lab test to detect *Shigella* in the stool.

Treatment

Symptomatic children and staff in childcare settings may be treated with antibiotics. *Shigella* bacteria can be resistant to one or more antibiotics. Amoxicillin is not an effective treatment. Oral rehydration solutions may be used for dehydration.

Prevention

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after using the toilet, 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 they have used the bathroom or have been diapered.
- Clean and disinfect diapering area and potty chairs after each use. Clean and disinfect bathroom toilets, sinks, and toys at least daily and when soiled (see Section 2).
- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled (see Section 2).
- Avoid swallowing water when in lakes, pools, splash pads, water parks, or hot tubs.
- Food Safety
 - Do not let children serve or prepare food for others in the childcare or school setting.
 - Minimize self-service food items in the school cafeteria and classroom (e.g., salad bars, trays of fruit, trays of desserts, etc.).

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

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