

SHIGELLOSIS

Shigellosis is an acute bacterial infection of the intestines that is found most often in young children. Only a few bacteria are needed to cause an infection and numerous outbreaks have been reported in child care settings. Children may spread infections acquired in child care facilities to their parent/guardians and siblings, and whole families may be ill within a matter of days.

CAUSE: *Shigella* bacteria

SYMPTOMS: Diarrhea (may be watery), fever, stomach cramps, nausea or vomiting. Stools may contain blood or mucus. Illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days. Children may show mild symptoms or they could be infected and show no symptoms.

SPREAD: *Shigella* leaves the body through the stool of an infected person and enters another person when hands, fingernails, food, or objects (such as toys) contaminated with stool are placed in the mouth. Spread can occur whether or not a person has symptoms.

INCUBATION: It takes 1 to 7 days, usually 2 to 4 days, from the time a person is exposed until symptoms develop.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD: As long as *Shigella* is present in the stool, in untreated individuals it may be up to 4 weeks after illness.



Persons infected with *Shigella* should receive treatment with antibiotics and may return when 2 successive fecal samples are collected 24 hours apart, and are found free of *Shigella* bacteria. Once *Shigella* has been identified in a child care facility, all symptomatic individuals should be excluded until stool culture is negative.



Provider: This disease is reportable to the health department. In Douglas County, call 444-7214. Outside Douglas County call your local or state health department.

Parents/guardians: inform your child care provider if your child has this illness.



Prevention Control

1. Wash hands thoroughly with soap and running water for at least 20 seconds after using the toilet, changing diapers, and before preparing or eating food. Thorough handwashing is the best way to prevent spread of infectious diseases found in the intestinal tract. Parent/guardians and child care providers should closely monitor handwashing of all children after bathroom use or diapering. If hand sanitizers are used, they may be used only after thorough handwashing.
2. Clean and disinfect contaminated areas (diapering area, toilets, potty-chairs) and sanitize toys at least daily and when soiled.



1. Bleach Disinfectant

- 1/4 cup bleach in a gallon of water
- 1 tablespoon bleach in a quart of water

PREPARE FRESH SOLUTION DAILY.

OR

2. Commercial disinfectant that is EPA approved

FOLLOW MANUFACTURER'S DIRECTIONS.



1. Bleach Sanitizer (Use non-scented)

- 1 teaspoons bleach in 1 gallon water
- 1/4 teaspoon bleach in 1 quart water

Use test strip to check concentration. Do not rinse. Air dry.

PREPARE FRESH SOLUTION DAILY.

OR

2. Commercial or food grade sanitizer that is EPA approved

FOLLOW MANUFACTURER'S DIRECTIONS.

3. **Diagnosis and Treatment:** Discuss this fact sheet with your physician if you or your child has the symptoms of shigellosis. There is a lab test to detect *Shigella* in the stool. If *Shigella* bacteria are found, antibiotic treatment is available. Because of the extremely small infective dose, once *Shigella* infection has been identified in an individual either attending or working at the child care center, all symptomatic persons should be excluded and cultured. Stool specimens from symptomatic persons who are household contacts of infected individuals should also be tested.



For more information, you or your physician may call the Douglas County Health Department at 444-7241 or your local health department.