



SHIGELLA

FACT SHEET

What is Shigella?

Shigella (Shigellosis) is a highly contagious infectious disease that causes diarrhea. This disease can be treated and most people get better quickly. Severe diarrhea can cause dehydration that can be dangerous for the very young, elderly or the chronically ill.

What are the symptoms?

The most common symptoms are diarrhea, fever, nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain and cramping. The stool (feces) may contain blood, mucus or pus. Symptoms may appear 1 to 7 days after exposure but, is most often within 2 to 4 days.

How is Shigella bacteria spread?

Shigella bacteria is passed from one infected person to the next. It is often spread when an infected person does not wash their hands with soap and water after using the toilet or changing a diaper. Shigella is present in the diarrheal stools of infected persons while they are sick and for a week or two afterwards. Most Shigella infections are the result of the bacterium passing from stools or soiled fingers of one person to the mouth of another person. Germs can be left on common surfaces in restrooms, toys or passed through food prepared by an infected person. This germ is easily spread in families and other settings where large numbers of people gather. In fact, a person who has had Shigella can continue to spread it for 30 days after they are well if they are not treated with the proper medication.

How can you prevent shigellosis?

- ALWAYS wash your hands thoroughly with soap and water before eating or touching food and after using the toilet or changing a diaper.
- If you are taking care of someone with diarrhea, scrub your hands with plenty of soap and water after cleaning the bathroom, helping the person use the toilet, or changing diapers, soiled clothes or soiled sheets.
- Do not share food, drinks, spoons or straws.
- Anyone who is experiencing Shigella-like symptoms should not go to school, daycare, work (especially food service), or other settings where large numbers of people gather.
- Anyone who is symptomatic should contact their medical provider for further direction.
- Anyone with symptoms should NOT prepare food for others.
- Cleaning: restrooms, toys and other common touch surfaces should be cleaned frequently and disinfected with a commercially prepared disinfectant or 1:100 bleach solution (approximately 1/4 cup bleach per gallon of water).

Where can I get more information?

Contact the Taney County Health Department at either location, Branson at (417) 334-4544 or Forsyth at (417) 546-4725 or visit our website at www.taneycohealth.org

