

FactSheet

Para Su Información

Shigellosis (*Shigella*)

What is Shigellosis?

Shigellosis is an infection of the large and small intestines caused by bacteria called *Shigella*.

Who gets Shigellosis?

Anyone can get shigellosis. Young children, especially those who attend daycare centers, are infected more often.

How is Shigellosis spread?

Shigella bacteria are found in the feces (stool) of an infected person. It may be spread by close contact or by eating or drinking contaminated food or water.

What are the symptoms?

People infected with *Shigella* may have mild to severe diarrhea, fever, nausea, vomiting, and cramps. Stools may contain blood, mucus and pus. Some people who are infected may have no symptoms. However, they still may transmit the infection to others.

How soon do symptoms appear?

Symptoms usually appear one to three days after infection. Onset of symptoms may also be as soon as 12 hours after infection, or as late as one week after infection.

How long is a person able to spread *Shigella*?

People are infectious as long as the *Shigella* bacteria are present in the feces. Most people have *Shigella* in their feces for one to two weeks. Treatment usually reduces the length of time a person can spread the bacteria.

What is the treatment for Shigellosis?

Most people recover without treatment. Persons with severe diarrhea, especially small children and elderly people, should see a doctor. Antibiotics may shorten the duration of diarrhea and remove the bacteria from the feces.

Should infected people be excluded from school or work?

People with diarrhea should not attend childcare/school or go to work. Most infected people may return when diarrhea stops if they carefully wash their hands after using the toilet. Foodhandlers and childcare workers must be excluded from work until they have submitted two consecutive negative stool cultures.

What can be done to prevent the spread of *Shigella*?

Everyone should carefully wash his or her hands after using the toilet, or changing diapers and before eating or handling food.

Where can I get more information?

Contact your doctor or the Southern Nevada Health District, Office of Epidemiology at (702) 759-1300.



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