

# 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 child care 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
- 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.

### 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.
- People with severe diarrhea, especially young 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 go to child care, school or work.
- Most infected people may return once diarrhea stops if they carefully wash their hands after using the toilet.
- Food handlers and child care workers must be excluded from work until they have had two negative stool cultures.

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

Carefully wash hands after using the toilet, changing diapers and/or before eating/handling food.

### What happens when the Southern Nevada Health District receives a report of shigellosis?

The health district conducts an investigation to try find out where and how the person became sick. Staff also works to prevent further spread of the illness in the community. To learn more, visit the Disease Report Investigation Process webpage at [www.SNHD.info](http://www.SNHD.info).

(continued)

**Where can I get more information?**

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



P.O. Box 3902 | Las Vegas, NV 89127  
(702) 759-1000 | [www.SNHD.info](http://www.SNHD.info)

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