

If you suspect a case of Shigellosis in your child care facility:

- Contact your local health department for advice or assistance. Prompt intervention may help prevent the spread of Shigellosis to others.
- Make sure all children and adults wash their hands after using the toilet, changing diapers and before handling food.
- Make sure procedures for cleaning and disinfecting toys are being followed; that toys are being cleaned and disinfected between use by children who are likely to put them in their mouths, especially in groups where there have been ill children.
- Notify parents of children in the involved classroom of the illness, ask that they have any child with diarrhea, vomiting or severe cramping evaluated by a physician and that they inform you of diarrheal illness in their child and family. Explain to them the value of handwashing with soap and running water in stopping the spread of infection in the home.
- Exclude the ill child and any children who subsequently develop diarrhea from child care until they no longer have diarrhea and have been shown to be free of the Shigella bacteria. Public health regulations require proof that an infected person is no longer excreting Shigella bacteria before they can return to their normal activities. Your health department can tell you when infected persons can return to child care.



For more information contact your local health department

Panhandle Health District Offices

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Protecting yourself and your family from.....

Shigellosis

A BACTERIAL DISEASE



What is Shigellosis?

Shigellosis is a disease caused by bacteria (*Shigella*). Ingesting a relatively small number of *Shigella* bacteria can make a person ill. Humans are the only significant source of *Shigella* bacteria.

What Are the Symptoms of Shigellosis?

The most common symptoms of this disease are diarrhea (which may contain blood, mucus and pus), fever, stomach cramps, nausea and vomiting.

After the bacteria are taken in by mouth, it usually takes one to three days before you become ill. To trace the cause of the illness, it is necessary to know what you ate and drank and where you were in the three days before you became ill.

- Illness usually lasts from four to seven days.
- Rarely, infection with some types of *Shigella* bacteria can be life threatening.

Where Are Shigella Bacteria Found?

Shigella bacteria are primarily found in humans.



How Does Shigellosis Spread?

Shigellosis occurs when *Shigella* bacteria are consumed.

People with Shigellosis have *Shigella* bacteria in their feces. If these people do not wash their hands properly after going to the toilet, their contaminated hands can spread the bacteria to surfaces touched by other people.

- Contaminated hands can spread the bacteria to food which may be eaten by other people.

- Hands can also become contaminated with bacteria when a person changes the diaper of an infant with Shigellosis.
- People can carry *Shigella* in their feces without having any symptoms. People that have been infected with Shigellosis can pass the bacteria in their stools for up to a month after the symptoms have stopped. These people can pass the disease on to others. Contaminated drinking water can spread *Shigella* bacteria.

I Think I May Have Shigellosis -What Should I Do?

If you have symptoms of Shigellosis, report them to your doctor immediately. This will ensure that you receive proper treatment and advice and that steps are taken to reduce the spread of the disease.

Can I Still Work?

Food handlers, child care workers and health care workers with Shigellosis cannot work until it is documented that they are not shedding *Shigella* bacteria in their stools. The Health District will release the work restriction when laboratory evidence confirms the person is not communicable.

Children must not attend child care centers, kindergartens or school while they are communicable with Shigellosis.

How Can I Prevent Spreading It to My Family?

In your household, the risk of spreading Shigellosis can be reduced. It is important that people with Shigellosis do not prepare or handle food to be eaten by other people and that no one else shares their towel or wash cloth.

How Can I Avoid Getting Shigellosis?

Careful Hand Washing

Everyone should wash their hands thoroughly with soap and hot running water for at least ten seconds:

- before preparing food
- before eating
- after going to the toilet or changing diapers

Food handlers must use disposable, paper towels or an air dryer to dry their hands. Cloth towels cannot be used as they get dirty quickly and can spread



germs from one person to another.

Safe Food Storage and Handling

Thoroughly wash raw vegetables before eating.

Household Cleaning

Bathrooms and toilets must be cleaned and sanitized often to avoid the spread of infections. Pay particular attention to toilet seats and handles, faucet handles and diaper change tables.

Water From Untreated Sources

Boil, or adequately treat water from rivers, lakes, or springs, before drinking.

Child Care Centers

Children are particularly susceptible to Shigellosis. Diaper changing and children's lack of proper hygiene makes the transmission of this disease in child care settings particularly high.

