

SHIGELLOSIS

Reportable Disease

CAUSE

Shigella, bacteria

SYMPTOMS

Watery or bloody diarrhea, abdominal pain, fever, and malaise. Headache and convulsions also possible.

SPREAD

A small inoculum (10 to 200 organisms) is sufficient to cause infection. As a result, spread can easily occur by the fecal-oral route and occurs in areas where hygiene is poor. Epidemics may be foodborne or waterborne. *Shigella* can also be transmitted by flies and sexual contact.

INCUBATION (time from exposure to onset of symptoms)

1 to 7 days, usually 1 to 3 days.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD

Until treated. If untreated, as long as *Shigella* bacteria are present in stool (up to 4 weeks).

EXCLUSION

School and Child care: **Until cleared by Contra Costa Public Health Department.**

DIAGNOSIS

Many different kinds of germs can cause diarrhea, so establishing the cause will help guide treatment. Determining that *Shigella* is the cause of the illness depends on laboratory tests that identify *Shigella* in the stools of an infected person. The laboratory can also do special tests to determine which antibiotics, if any, would be best to treat the infection.

TREATMENT

Persons with mild infections usually recover quickly without antibiotic treatment. However, appropriate antibiotic treatment may shorten the duration of illness and decrease the spread of infection. Antibiotic treatment is recommended for patients with severe disease, bloody diarrhea, or compromised immune systems. When diarrhea is watery, your health care provider may recommend plenty of fluids, such as pedialyte for children or diluted sports drink for adults and antibiotics. If symptoms do not go away after treatment, contact your health care provider again. Health care workers, child care workers, food handlers should not work when diarrhea is present. Please call Contra Costa Public Health at 925-313-6740 for specific recommendations.

PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Wash hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Wash hands after touching any materials soiled with stool.
- Wash hands before preparing meals and before eating.
- If traveling to a developing country, drink bottled water or bottled beverage.
- Leftover food should be covered and make sure that no flies land on your food.
- Dispose of soiled diapers properly
- Disinfect diaper changing areas after using them.
- Keep children with diarrhea out of child care settings.
- Supervise handwashing of toddlers and small children after they use the toilet.

- Do not prepare food for others while ill with diarrhea
- Avoid swallowing water from ponds, lakes, or untreated pools.

For more information please contact Contra Costa Public Health at 925-313-6740 and visit our website at <http://cchealth.org/shigellosis/> or <http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/shigellosis/#tips>