

**What is shigellosis?**

Shigellosis is an infection of the intestinal tract caused by the bacteria *Shigella*. People exposed to *Shigella* may experience mild or severe diarrhea, often with fever and traces of blood or mucous in the stool. These symptoms may appear one to seven days after exposure but usually within one to three days. Some infected people may not show any symptoms.

Are children at child-care settings at greater risk for shigellosis?

Anyone can get shigellosis, but it is seen more common in young children. Children in child-care settings, their caregivers and other people living in crowded conditions where personal hygiene is difficult to maintain are at greater risk of infection.

How is shigellosis spread?

The bacteria are found in the intestinal tract of infected people who, in turn, may contaminate food or water. The bacteria are spread by eating or drinking contaminated food or water or by direct or indirect contact with fecal material from an infected person.

What should caregivers do if staff members or children at the child-care setting are diagnosed with shigellosis?

If a parent reports shigellosis infection in a child who attends the child-care setting, notify your local or state health department. Follow the prevention measures described below.

Should children or others be excluded from child-care settings, work or other activities if they have shigellosis?

All children should be excluded from child-care settings until diarrhea ceases and two successive negative stool cultures are obtained.

If diagnosed with shigellosis, health-care workers, food handlers, and children and staff of child-care settings should stay home until diarrhea has ceased and two consecutive stool cultures test negative for the bacteria.

What can be done to prevent the spread of shigellosis disease?

- Wash hands with soap carefully and frequently, especially after going to the bathroom, after changing diapers, before preparing food or beverages, arriving at day care in the morning and before leaving day care at the end of the day.

- Dispose of soiled diapers properly in a closed-lid garbage can.
- Disinfect diaper changing areas after using them.
- Keep children with diarrhea out of child-care settings.
- Supervise hand washing of toddlers and small children after they use the toilet.
- Do not prepare food for others if you experience diarrhea or vomiting.
- Avoid drinking water from lakes or swimming pools.
- Avoid swimming in lakes or swimming pools if you experience diarrhea or vomiting.

Whose responsibility is it to report shigellosis infection?

Reporting shigellosis infections to the North Dakota Department of Health (NDDoH) is mandated by state law. People diagnosed with shigellosis at a health-care facility will be reported to the NDDoH upon laboratory confirmation.

Parents of children diagnosed with shigellosis infections should notify child caregivers immediately. Caregivers can call their local or state health department for further guidance on prevention measures and exclusion criteria.

Additional Information:

For additional information, call the North Dakota Department of Health at 800.472.2180.

This disease is a reportable condition. As mandated by North Dakota law, any incidence of this disease shall be reported to the North Dakota Department of Health.

Resources: American Academy of Pediatrics. [Children In Out-of-Home Child Care]. In: Pickering LK, ed. Red Book: 2003 Report of the Committee on Infectious Diseases. 26th ed. Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics; 2003:[123-137].
Control of Communicable Disease Manual, 18th Edition-2004, Heymann, David, MD ed.