

SHIGELLOSIS

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WHAT IS SHIGELLOSIS?

It is a gastrointestinal illness caused by a bacteria called **Shigella**.

HOW IS THE DISEASE SPREAD?

The disease is spread from person to person. It may also be spread by contaminated foods or drinking water. Stool contaminated hands are the most frequent way of spreading the shigella germs.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms include, vomiting, diarrhea and cramps. In serious cases the stool (bowel movement) may have blood, mucus, and pus in it. To know for sure if you have the disease you should see your doctor who will then take a sample of the stools and have it checked by a laboratory to see if the germs that cause shigellosis are present.

Symptoms usually appear within four (4) days after the person is infected. However, they may appear in as short a time as one (1) day or as long as seven (7) days.

WHO CAN GET THE DISEASE?

Anyone can get the disease, but it is more common and more serious in children. You can catch it over and over again; there are no shots available for protection.

CONTROL THE SPREAD

Important things to do to control the spread of the disease are:

1. Wash your hands after going to the bathroom
2. Wash your hands before eating
3. Wash your hands before preparing food or feeding a child
4. Protect food from flies
5. DO NOT CONTINUE WORKING if your occupation is in *child/patient care or food handling* until released by a physician, or the health department.

TREATMENT

A doctor can prescribe an antibiotic to treat shigellosis. Children, food handlers, and care providers should always be treated.