



## Shigella

Your child may have been exposed to this disease on \_\_\_\_\_.  
Date(s)

Please check your child for symptoms through \_\_\_\_\_.  
Date

*If your child has symptoms, please contact your child's healthcare provider.*

### **If my child has this disease, when can he or she return to school or child care?**

**Children in kindergarten, preschool, or child care may NOT return to school UNTIL they are approved by the Local Health Department.**

**Children first grade or older stay home until 24 hours after symptoms stop.**

#### **Shigella is a bacteria.**

It causes the following symptoms:

- Diarrhea, which is sometimes bloody
- Fever
- Abdominal pain
- A painful feeling of needing to pass stools even when bowels are empty

If a person gets sick, it usually starts 1 to 2 days after they are exposed, but it can take up to a week. The illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days. Some people have mild symptoms or none at all.

Shigella can be a serious illness for children with

immune system problems that make it hard to fight off infection.

#### **How is shigella spread?**

Shigella is spread by the fecal-oral route.

- A child putting an item in his or her mouth that has touched the stool of a sick child
- Drinking from water fountain with shigella bacteria in it
- Eating food with shigella bacteria in it
- Close contact with a person with shigella

A person with shigella can spread the bacteria for as long as 4 weeks.

#### **What can I do now?**

**Watch your child** for symptoms, and call your child's doctor or health care provider if your child becomes sick. **If your child gets sick, prevent others from getting sick by:**

- Keeping a sick child out of school, childcare, group play, and swimming pools while ill with diarrhea.
- Washing hands after using the bathroom, before handling food, and after changing diapers.
- Wear gloves and protective clothing. Clean diaper-changing areas after using them. Disinfect the surface where the diaper was changed by using a cleaning solution that kills viruses and bacteria, such as 1 to 3 tablespoons of bleach mixed with 1 quart (32 ounces) of water. Discard all contaminated items in a sealed plastic bag and place in the trash.
- If an adult gets sick with shigella, the person should not prepare food for other people.