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### Shigella (Shigellosis)

<p>What is Shigella?</p>	<p>Shigella is a bacterium that infects the bowels. The Shigella bacterium causes an illness called Shigellosis, which most often occurs in young children.</p>
<p>What are the symptoms of Shigellosis?</p>	<p>The symptoms of Shigellosis include: diarrhea (may be watery), fever, stomach cramps, nausea or vomiting. The stools of a person with Shigellosis may contain blood or mucus.</p> <p>Symptoms of Shigellosis typically last between four and seven days. Persons with Shigellosis, however, can show mild or no symptoms when infected.</p>
<p>How is Shigellosis spread?</p>	<p>Shigellosis is spread through contact with the stool of an infected person, and then placing your hands, food or another object contaminated with the bacteria in your mouth.</p> <p>A person with Shigellosis can spread the bacteria even if he/she does not have symptoms, and is contagious as long as the Shigella bacteria is present in the stool, which can be up to four weeks after the onset of the illness.</p> <p>A person with Shigellosis is considered contagious until two negative stool cultures have been obtained 24 hours apart and 48 hours after the person has finished taking a round of antibiotics.</p>
<p>How can I keep from getting Shigellosis?</p>	<p>To keep from getting Shigellosis, you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wash your hands thoroughly with soap and running water after using the restroom, after changing diapers, and before preparing or eating food. This is the best way to prevent the spread of infectious diseases found in the intestinal tract, such as Shigellosis.</li> <li>• Do not use wading pools for groups of children, because Shigellosis is transferred easily in standing water.</li> <li>• Dispose of soiled diapers properly.</li> <li>• If you have diarrhea, stay home from work, school or day care until you are better. Also, do not prepare food for others while you have diarrhea. You may also want to contact your doctor for testing.</li> </ul>

<p>If I've been exposed to Shigella, how long will it take for symptoms to develop?</p>	<p>The initial symptoms of Shigellosis can occur between one and seven days (usually one to three) after exposure.</p>
<p>What treatments are available for Shigellosis? How serious is the disease?</p>	<p>Your doctor may also prescribe an antibiotic. Medicines that reduce diarrhea by slowing down bowel activity, such as Imodium AD or Lomotil, may make matters worse.</p> <p>In some cases, severe diarrhea may require hospitalization to avoid dehydration. In children less than 2 years old, Shigellosis has been found to cause a high fever and seizures.</p>
<p>How many cases of Shigella have been reported in Northern Kentucky? Nationally?</p>	<p>In Northern Kentucky, an average of 25 cases of Shigellosis are reported in a typical year.</p> <p>Every year, about 18,000 cases of Shigellosis are reported in the United States. Because many milder cases are not diagnosed or reported, the actual number of infections may be 20 times greater.</p> <p>Shigellosis is particularly common and causes recurrent problems in settings where hygiene is poor and can sometimes sweep through entire communities. Shigellosis is more common in summer than winter.</p> <p>Children, especially toddlers aged 2 to 4, are the most likely to get shigellosis. In Northern Kentucky, many cases are related to the spread of the illness in child-care settings, and many more are the result of the spread of the illness in families with small children.</p>
<p>Where can I get more information on Shigellosis?</p>	<p>For more information online, you can visit the Centers for Disease Control at <a href="http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/shigellosis/">http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/shigellosis/</a>.</p> <p>Or, for more information on the Health Department's programs, please call the Carroll County Health Center 502-732-6641, Gallatin County Health Center 859-567-2844, Owen County Health Center 502-484-5736 or the Pendleton County Health Center 859-654-6985</p>

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Sources: Northern Kentucky Health Department Epidemiology; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention