

Shigellosis

WHAT IS IT?

Shigella is a genus of bacteria that can cause diarrhea that may last more than three days and contain blood or mucus. It can cause stomach upset, pain, or cramps and fever. It originates in humans and can be transmitted through infectious fecal particles to contaminate food, water, or surfaces or through close contact with someone ill with a *Shigella* infection/shigellosis. Up to 450,000 cases are estimated to occur in the US annually. Most cases resolve in about a week, without the need for medical intervention. However, in immunocompromised individuals, bloodstream infections and other serious complications can occur.

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

- Up to 450,000 cases are estimated to occur in the US annually with children under 5 most at risk.
- The bacteria can be easily spread leading to outbreaks which often:
 - occur in childcare settings
 - occur among homeless people who may not have reliable access to sanitary restrooms.
 - are linked to infected food handlers in foodservice settings.
 - are linked to foods that undergo human handling in their manufacture.
 - can originate in a contaminated food (e.g., parsley), then be spread via infected food workers.

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS



Diarrhea



Stomach
Cramps



Fever



Vomiting

WHAT DO I DO ABOUT IT?

Prevention relies on a combination of measures such as:

1. Effective handwashing with soap and water after toileting or changing diapers and before preparing food.
2. Effective cleaning and sanitizing/disinfecting with products known to be effective against *Shigella*, used according to the label directions.
3. Federal or state regulations requiring some food workers to [receive approval](#) to return to work after symptoms resolve.

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