

# SHIGELLOSIS

## FACT SHEET

### What is Shigellosis?

Shigellosis is an intestinal infection caused by *Shigella* bacteria. The bacteria attacks the lining of the large intestine, causing swelling, ulcers on the intestinal wall and bloody diarrhea.

### Symptoms of Shigellosis

The disease is usually self limiting, lasting about 4-7 days. Common signs and symptoms include:

- Watery or bloody diarrhea
- Fever
- Abdominal cramps
- Nausea and vomiting

Shigellosis can cause dehydration and especially young children could be a risk for seizures. Some types of shigela can also lead to other complications like kidney failure and death.

### How do People get Shigellosis?

*Shigella* bacteria is usually passed from person to person, via fecal-oral route, especially when hygiene and hand washing is inadequate. It can also be acquired when consuming contaminated food or water.

### Diagnosis and Treatment of Shigellosis

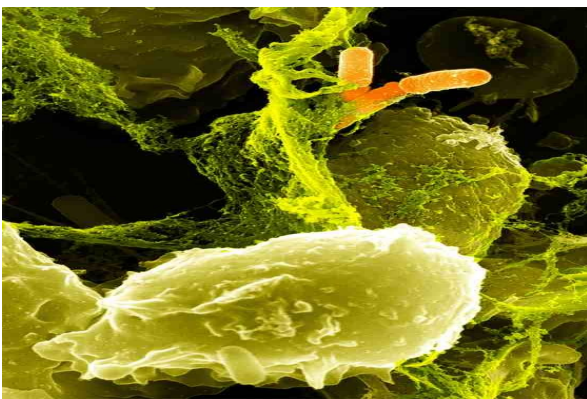
A stool sample can confirm the disease.

Most people with shigellosis will recover on their own. Some may require fluids to prevent dehydration. Antibiotics can be used to treat severe cases or to shorten the carrier phase, which may be important for food handlers, children in daycare or institutionalized individuals.

### How Can I Help Prevent the Spread of Shigellosis?

Currently, there is no vaccine to prevent shigellosis. The following precautions can help prevent the transmission of Shigellosis:

- Wash hands with soap carefully and frequently, especially after going to the bathroom, after changing diapers, and before preparing foods or beverages.
- Dispose of soiled diapers properly.
- 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 while ill with diarrhea.
- Avoid swallowing water from ponds, lakes, or untreated pools.



For more information, contact your local public health department or visit [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and search for “*shigellosis*”