

## ***Shigella* Information Sheet**

### **What is *Shigella*?**

*Shigella* is a type of bacteria (germ) that can cause stomach illness. *Shigella* is a common cause of diarrhea in the United States.

### **How can you catch *Shigella*?**

*Shigella* is passed from person to person through contact with the feces (poop) of an infected person.

Ways that *Shigella* can spread include:

- Putting anything in your mouth that has been contaminated with feces from an infected person
- Eating food contaminated with *Shigella*
- Swimming in or drinking water contaminated by sewage or feces
- Cockroaches and flies can spread this infection to people from sewage, feces or used toilet paper

### **What are the symptoms of *Shigella*?**

Symptoms usually start 1-2 days after being exposed to the bacteria, though it may take up to 4 days for symptoms to appear. Symptoms can include:

- Diarrhea (often bloody)
- Stomach cramps
- Fever

**People with this infection should NOT attend childcare or work as food handlers, healthcare providers or childcare workers until symptoms have stopped!**

### **How can you be treated for *Shigella*?**

*Shigella* infections usually clear up in 5-7 days without antibiotics. Your doctor might recommend medicine to reduce fever, rest, and extra fluids, and may prescribe antibiotics in severe cases. Children who attend childcare and people in certain jobs (like child care, health care, and food handling) should receive antibiotic treatment.

### **How can you prevent *Shigella*?**

- Wash hands with soap and water, especially after using the bathroom or changing diapers. Make sure children do a good job washing their hands, too!
- Wash hands before eating or preparing any foods or beverages
- Throw dirty diapers in a garbage can with a tight lid, so insects can't get in
- Disinfect diaper-changing areas after using them
- Keep children with diarrhea home from childcare or school until diarrhea is resolved for 24 hours
- Only drink safe, treated water. Do not swallow water in pools, lakes, rivers, etc.
- Do not swim when you have diarrhea
- Follow food precautions when traveling to developing countries