

What to know about *Shigella*

There are increased cases of an illness called *Shigella* in our area including in people living outside and in shelters.

Shigella causes diarrhea

- *Shigella* is an illness that causes **diarrhea, fever, stomach cramps**, and sometimes **vomiting**. Diarrhea usually lasts 3 to 10 days and can include blood, mucus or pus.
- Most people will get better on their own in 1 to 2 weeks. Symptoms can last longer and be more serious in people who have weakened immune systems.

Shigella is spread through poop

- *Shigella* spreads when one person's infected poop gets into another person's **mouth** through food or water, from objects or surfaces with *Shigella* bacteria on them, or during sex.
- *Shigella* spreads very easily. Even a very small amount is enough to make someone sick.
- *Shigella* can live for 1 to 4 weeks in someone's poop. People can still spread *Shigella* even if their symptoms are better.

Help stop the spread of *Shigella*

- Wash your hands often with soap and clean water, especially after using the bathroom, changing diapers, and before you make or eat food. Soap and water works best. If you don't have soap and water, use a hand sanitizer that has at least 60% alcohol.
- If you can, avoid sex if you or your partner have diarrhea or had diarrhea in the last two weeks.

- If you have sex, think about taking these steps to lower the risk of spreading *Shigella*:
 - Wash your genitals, buttocks, and hands with soap and water before and after sex.
 - Use condoms or dental dams during any kind of oral sex and anal sex. Wear latex gloves if your hands or fingers touch another person's buttocks.

If you have diarrhea or other symptoms

- Avoid making, serving or sharing food.
- Avoid sex if possible.
- Drink extra water or other drinks without caffeine or alcohol.
- You can get tested for *Shigella* at a doctor's office or clinic. If you test positive for *Shigella*, you may be able to stay in a hotel for free while you get better.

When to get medical care

If you think you have *Shigella*, try to get care and testing to make sure. It is especially important to visit a clinic or get care if:

- You have a weakened immune system (such as with HIV or treatment for cancer).
- You have frequent diarrhea that goes on for more than 3 days or have **bloody** diarrhea with fever, severe stomach cramping or tenderness, or your symptoms last more than 2 weeks.
- You have symptoms of dehydration—dark yellow pee or pee that smells strong, feeling extra thirsty, peeing less than usual, or feeling dizzy.



For more info and to find services, call local public health at 503-988-8939.