



# Shigella Infection in Schools

## What is *Shigella*?

*Shigella* is a very contagious bacteria that can make people sick. The illness caused by *Shigella* is called shigellosis.

## How does *Shigella* spread?

It takes just a small number of *Shigella* germs to make someone sick. You can get *Shigella* from:

- Getting *Shigella* germs on your hands and then touching your food or mouth
- Eating food that was prepared by someone who is sick with *Shigella*
- Swallowing recreational water that is contaminated with *Shigella* germs

## What are the symptoms?

Most people infected with *Shigella* feel sick between 12 to 96 hours after infection. Symptoms include:

- Diarrhea (sometimes bloody)
- Stomach pain
- Headache
- Fever
- Feeling the need to pass stool, even when the bowels are empty

Some people infected with *Shigella* will not have any symptoms.

## How serious is *Shigella* infection?

People of all ages can get the disease. Most people will recover without treatment. Young children and people with weakened immune systems are more likely to have severe illness.

## How is *Shigella* infection treated?

Most people infected with *Shigella* will recover without treatment in 5 to 7 days. Some people may experience symptoms anywhere from a few days to 4 or more weeks. People may be contagious for a while even after their symptoms have stopped. Drink plenty of liquids to prevent dehydration. If your illness progresses, please consult your healthcare provider.

## Can *Shigella* infection be prevented?

- Students and staff should not go to school while ill.
- Wash your hands with soap and water, especially:
  - After using the restroom
  - Before eating or preparing food for others.
  - After changing a diaper or helping to clean another person who went to the bathroom.
- When you are sick, do not prepare food or care for others who are sick.
- Do **NOT** share food if you are sick.
- Clean and disinfect high contact surfaces (i.e.: door knobs, desks, counters, etc.).

SOURCES: <https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/>

