



August 29, 2019

Public Health Advisory Increase in Cases of *Shigella*

The City of Amarillo Public Health Department has received an increased number of reports of *Shigella* cases in our community since July, especially in daycare age children. Shigellosis is caused by *Shigella* bacteria found in the feces (poop) of those who are infected. People are exposed by direct or indirect feces to mouth exposure such as: consuming contaminated food or water, touching your mouth with contaminated hands, or when contaminated objects touch a person's mouth.

Symptoms of *Shigella* include the following:

- Acute onset of diarrhea (may contain blood and mucus)
- Moderate to high fever
- Abdominal pain
- Cramping
- Nausea
- Vomiting

It is possible to have a mild infection. *Shigella* can remain in the stool of an infected person for one to four weeks after onset of illness unless appropriate antibiotic therapy is received.

Good hand washing is very important to stop the bacteria from spreading and should be done:

- Before preparing or eating food
- After going to the bathroom
- After changing a diaper
- After caring for someone who has diarrhea

Symptomatic individuals should not participate in recreational water activities until one week after diarrhea has stopped without the use of anti-diarrheal medication.

To stop further spread in daycares, employees or attendees who experience *Shigella* symptoms should notify the daycare administration and seek medical attention. Those who test positive for *Shigella* will need to provide a medical release clearing them to return to the daycare after receiving a negative stool culture result performed at least 48 hours after the last dose of antibiotics.

Shigella is a Texas Notifiable Condition and should be reported to our Communicable Disease staff at phone number 806-378-6321 or fax number 806-378-6306 within one week.

City of Amarillo Department of Public Health

Amarillo Bi-City, Bi-County Health District
1000 Martin Road, Amarillo, TX 79107
(806) 378-6300
amarillopublichealth.org