

## What about staying away from work, school or preschool?

Everyone with this infection should stay away from work/school/preschool while they have symptoms. Most people can return after they have been completely free of symptoms for two days.

The following people require faecal clearance before they can return to work/school/preschool:

- Food handlers
- Food handlers who are close contacts of a case
- Health care professionals
- Teachers
- School children
- Preschoolers in day care centres, crèches or kindergartens

Clearance requires two consecutive negative faecal specimens taken at least than 48 hours apart and at least 48 hours after stopping antibiotics if these have been prescribed.

Food handler contacts of a case only require one negative specimen before returning to work.

Faecal specimens should be submitted to your doctor or local Community and Public Health Office.

## Other resources available on gastrointestinal infections:

- Norovirus
- Campylobacter
- Salmonella
- Giardia
- Cryptosporidium
- Yersinia
- E. coli O157 (VTEC)

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**Communicable Diseases  
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# Shigella



# Canterbury

District Health Board

Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha

# What is Shigellosis?

Shigellosis is an infection of the bowel caused by the *Shigella* bacteria. It is not common in New Zealand and is usually acquired overseas.

## What are the symptoms?

Symptoms consist of:

- Watery diarrhoea
- Fever
- Nausea
- Vomiting (sometimes)

Symptoms usually begin 1-3 days after ingesting the bacteria.

In typical cases, the stools/faeces/poo contain blood, mucus and pus. Dehydration (fluid loss), especially among infants, may be severe.

Persons may transmit the disease if they don't wash their hands thoroughly after going to the toilet.

In rare cases, a person may go on to be a carrier and excrete the bacteria in faeces (poo) for months.

## How is it caught?

Humans are the main host for the *Shigella* bacteria.

Common sources of infection are:

- Person-to-person spread from someone who is infected with the bacteria
- Eating food that has been contaminated by water, hands and insects
- Drinking water or ice that is contaminated by sewage

Travellers should consider the following:

- Use only bottled water for drinking and washing teeth. Ask for drinks without ice unless it is made from safe water
- Avoid uncooked food apart from fruits, vegetables and nuts that can be peeled or shelled by you
- Make sure food has been thoroughly and freshly cooked and is piping hot when served

**A good general rule is boil it, cook it, peel it or leave it**

## How is it treated?

Usually only fluid replacement and rest are needed. Antibiotics can be given if necessary.

## How is spread prevented?

- Wash hands thoroughly after going to the toilet, and especially before eating and before feeding infants
- Children with diarrhoea should be kept away from other children
- Anyone nursing or looking after an infected child should pay special attention to their own personal hygiene, particularly hand washing
- An infected person should not swim in a public swimming or spa pool, paddling pool or share bath water with anyone.

