

Recent Increase in Drug-Resistant Shigellosis

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recently notified MDH about increases in drug resistance in the infection Shigellosis. View the full [Increase in Extensively Drug-Resistant Shigellosis in the United States \(https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2023/han00486.asp\)](https://emergency.cdc.gov/han/2023/han00486.asp) HAN alert.

CDC is asking health care providers to be vigilant about the possibility of shigellosis in patients at risk, including young children, MSM, people experiencing homelessness, people living with HIV, and international travelers. Antimicrobial therapy is not always indicated for shigellosis, but if considered, it should be guided by results from stool culture and sensitivity testing. Additional information can be found on the [Shigellosis \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/shigellosis\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/shigellosis) page, including recommendations for prevention and information on reporting.

Antibiotic resistance is a particular concern in people who report exposures to or symptoms of infection:

CDC states, "Increases in drug-resistant Shigella infections have been described among adult men and may be associated with transmission among MSM. Cases of shigellosis co-occurring with other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV, have been described among MSM."

A recent study, [Enteric Infections in Men Who Have Sex With Men \(https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/74/Supplement_2/S169/6567964\)](https://academic.oup.com/cid/article/74/Supplement_2/S169/6567964), supports these conclusions.

Shigellosis is a reportable communicable disease in Minnesota and must be reported by health care facilities, medical laboratories, to MDH **within one working day**. The [Reporting Shigellosis \(https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/shigellosis/report.html\)](https://www.health.state.mn.us/diseases/shigellosis/report.html) page details how to report a case.

Shigellosis is an intestinal infection caused by a family of bacteria known as *Shigella*. Shigellosis is very contagious. People get infected with *Shigella* when they come in contact with and swallow small amounts of bacteria from the stool of a person who is infected with *Shigella*. The main sign of a *Shigella* infection is diarrhea, which often is bloody, and accompanied by fever, and stomach pain.

Shigella can pass from one person to another in a variety of ways including exposure to contaminated fingers or body parts. One way *Shigella* can spread easily and rapidly is during sexual activity through:

- Direct sexual contact:
 - Oral or anal sex.
 - Anal play (rimming, fingering).
- Indirect sexual contact:

- Handling contaminated objects, such as sex toys, used condoms or barriers, and douching materials.

Symptoms usually start 1–2 days after ingesting the germs and include bloody diarrhea, fever, and stomach pain. People should speak with a health care provider about *Shigella*, if they develop a diarrheal illness.

Prevention

- Wash hands, genitals, and sex toys with soap and water before and after sex.
- Use condoms and dental dams during sex.
- Wait two weeks after diarrhea to have sex.
- Do not prepare food for others while sick.
- See a doctor if you have diarrhea (especially bloody diarrhea), cramps, fever, and nausea.
- View the [Hand Hygiene in Healthcare Settings \(https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/index.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/handhygiene/index.html) webpage for ways to practice proper hand hygiene.
- Utilize the [Shigella Prevention and Control Toolkit \(https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/shigella-toolkit.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/shigella-toolkit.html) for additional information and prevention methods.

Men who have sex with men (MSM) are at higher risk for contracting and/or transmitting *Shigella*, as detailed in the [Publications, Data, and Statistics \(https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/publications.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/publications.html) page. CDC has asked health departments to ensure that STI clinics and other places that specifically reach out to MSM are informed and have accurate information to share with their clients/patients. We are asking our external partners to help raise awareness about shigellosis by providing their clients/patients and sexual partners with information on the infection and how to prevent it. When appropriate, a comprehensive STI risk assessment and history of recent travel are important.

Medical personnel at all community organizations and clinics that provide services related to STIs need to be aware of this situation since shigellosis is not limited to individual people with penises who are sexually involved with other people with penises. Those facilities should have received a copy of the HAN from CDC already.

Links for information and materials

- [Information for Specific Groups \(https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/audience.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/audience.html).
- Fact sheets on shigellosis that can be printed out and given to patients/clients can be found at [Health Promotion Materials \(https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/materials.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/materials.html).
 - [Fact Sheets \(https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/factsheets.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/factsheets.html).
 - [Palm Cards \(https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/palm-cards.html\)](https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/palm-cards.html).

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Shigella print materials can be ordered for free through [CDC-Info on Demand \(https://wwwn.cdc.gov/pubs/cdcinfoondemand.aspx?ProgramID=215\)](https://wwwn.cdc.gov/pubs/cdcinfoondemand.aspx?ProgramID=215).

For questions or concerns in Minnesota, please call the general MDH number, 651-201-5414, and ask to speak to someone in the STD, HIV & TB Section about shigellosis.

Minnesota Department of Health
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