



## **SHIGELLOSIS (SHIGELLA) FACT SHEET**

### **WHAT IS SHIGELLA?**

Shigellosis is an infectious disease caused by a group of bacteria called Shigella.

### **HOW DO YOU GET SHIGELLA?**

A person may get Shigella by putting something in their mouths or swallow something that has come into contact with stool of a person infected with Shigella. Sources of infection include: contaminated food, water (recreational water or drinking water), and surfaces (such as toys, bathroom fixtures, changing tables, etc.).

### **SYMPTOMS**

Diarrhea, fever, and abdominal pain. In people with healthy immune systems, symptoms generally last 5 to 7 days. Symptoms of shigellosis generally begin 1 to 2 days after becoming infected with the bacteria.

### **TREATMENT**

Diarrhea caused by Shigella usually resolves without antibiotic treatment in 5 to 7 days. Antibiotics may be used in severe cases. However, Shigella can be resistant to antibiotics. Discuss treatment options with your doctor.

### **PREVENTION**

- Wash your hands thoroughly after using the bathroom or changing diaper, and before preparing or eating food.
- Avoid swallowing water when swimming or playing in lakes, ponds, streams, or untreated swimming pools
- When traveling internationally, follow food and water precautions strictly and wash hands with soap frequently.
- Any infected child attending a child care center should be excluded until diarrhea has ceased and after two consecutive stools are negative for Shigella.

### **DPHD EFFORTS**

Reports of suspected and confirmed cases of disease are made to the Delaware Public Health District (DPHD). The DPHD investigates potential sources of illness, conducts surveillance for the spread of illness, and engages in community outreach and education.