SHIGELLOSIS
Reportable to local or state health department

Consult the health department before posting/distributing Parent/Guardian fact sheet.

CAUSE
Shigella bacteria.

SYMPTOMS
Diarrhea (may be watery), fever, stomach cramps, nausea, or vomiting. Stools may contain blood or mucus. Infected persons may have mild symptoms or may not have any symptoms at all. Illness usually lasts 4 to 7 days.

SPREAD
Shigella bacteria leave the body through the stool of an infected person and enter another person when hands, food, or objects (such as toys) contaminated with stool are placed in the mouth. Spread can occur when people do not wash their hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.

INCUBATION
It takes from 1 to 7 days, usually 2 to 4 days, from the time a person is exposed until symptoms start.

CONTAGIOUS PERIOD
As long as Shigella bacteria are present in the stool, a person can pass the germs on to other people. For some children, the bacteria can be found in the stool up to 4 weeks after illness.

EXCLUSION
Childcare: Until 24 hours after treatment with antibiotics has been started and diarrhea has stopped. Children who have Shigella in their stools but do not have symptoms may need to be treated, but do not need to be excluded.

School: None, unless the child is not feeling well and/or has diarrhea and needs to use the bathroom frequently. Exclusion may be necessary during outbreaks.

Everyone with Shigella should not use swimming beaches, pools, spas, water parks, or hot tubs until 2 weeks after diarrhea has stopped.

Staff infected with Shigella bacteria may be restricted from working in food service. Call your local health department to see if these restrictions apply.

DIAGNOSIS
Recommend parents/guardians call their healthcare provider if their child has symptoms of shigellosis. There is a lab test to detect Shigella in the stool.

TREATMENT
If Shigella bacteria are found, antibiotic treatment is available. Children and staff in childcare settings should be treated. Shigella bacteria can be resistant to one or more antibiotics. Ampicillin is not a recommended treatment. Vomiting and diarrhea may lead to dehydration, which may be a medical emergency. Ask a healthcare provider how to prevent dehydration.
PREVENTION/CONTROL

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and warm running water after using the toilet and changing diapers and before preparing or eating food. **Thorough handwashing is the best way to prevent the spread of communicable diseases.** Staff should closely monitor handwashing of all children after children have used the bathroom or have been diapered.

- Discourage self-service food items in the school cafeteria (i.e., salad bars, trays of fruit, trays of desserts) and in the classroom. An adult should serve children their lunches and group snacks.

- DO NOT allow children to swallow water when swimming in lakes, swimming pools, hot tubs, water parks, or fountains.

- Clean and disinfect diapering area and potty chairs after each use and bathroom toilets, sinks, and toys at least daily and when soiled.

- Clean and sanitize mouthed toys, objects, and surfaces at least daily and when soiled.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
Kentucky Department for Public Health Frankfort, KY http://chfs.ky.gov/dph/
Kentucky Regional Poison Center Louisville, KY EMERGENCY: 1-800-222-1222
Lake Cumberland District Health Department Somerset KY www.lcdhd.org (606) 678-4761
The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Atlanta, GA Toll free: 1-800-311-3435 www.cdc.gov