

For more information on Shigella or to report individuals with vomiting, diarrhea or fever associated with food consumption, contact:  
Email: [fhdepi@sdcounty.ca.gov](mailto:fhdepi@sdcounty.ca.gov)  
Phone: (858) 505-6814  
Website: [www.sdcdehq.org](http://www.sdcdehq.org)



# SHIGELLA INFECTION PREVENTION & CONTROL

Shigellosis typically occurs directly or indirectly by fecal–oral contamination. Most Shigella infections are spread by stool or soiled fingers of an infected person to another person via direct contact or from consuming food contaminated by an infected food handler who may or may not be symptomatic. Since people could be infected and not display any symptoms and therefore unknowingly come to work while shedding the bacteria.

The most important method in avoiding contamination of food with viral, bacterial, and/or parasitic disease is for all food handlers to wash their hands regularly and follow guidance below.

## Handwashing

Food employees shall thoroughly wash their hands and arms with soap and warm water for at least 10 to 15 seconds; thoroughly rinse with clean, running water and properly dry their hands and arms. Employees shall pay particular attention to the areas underneath the fingernails and between the fingers.

Ensure handwashing signs are posted in the appropriate locations.

**Employees shall wash their hands in all of the following instances (and more):**

- After touching face, or other areas of bare skin including cuts or sores and after touching hair.
- After using the restroom.
- After cleaning the restroom.
- After touching animals.
- After coughing, sneezing, using a handkerchief or disposable tissue.
- After using tobacco, eating, or drinking.
- After handling soiled equipment or utensils.
- Immediately before engaging in food preparations, including working with non-prepackaged food, clean equipment and utensils, and unwrapped single-use food containers and utensils.
- During food preparation, as often as necessary to remove dirt and contamination.
- Before changing tasks to prevent cross-contamination.
- When switching between working with raw food and working with ready-to-eat food.
- After collecting and taking out the garbage.
- After touching soiled clothing, soiled wipe cloths, etc.
- Before putting on disposable gloves to start working with food.
- Before dispensing or serving food or handling clean tableware and serving utensils in the food service area.
- After engaging in other activities that contaminate hands.

## Preventing the Spread of Illness

- All food employees should practice diligent handwashing and good personal hygiene (see reverse page).
- Use utensils or gloves to eliminate bare hand contact with ready- to-eat food. Avoid bare hand contact with ready-to-eat foods for at least two weeks after illnesses have stopped.
- Frequently clean and disinfect the facility and food areas per guidelines (see reverse page).
- Exclude food employees from working with food, utensils, and equipment for at least 48 hours after symptoms have stopped.

## Specific Cleaning Methods

### Cleaning Spills of Diarrhea, Vomit or Feces:

1. Use personal protective equipment (PPE), such as gloves, masks, and gowns to protect yourself and your clothes from contamination.
2. Block-off area immediately.
3. Clean up visible debris using disposable absorbent material (paper towels or other disposable cloths) and minimize aerosols.
4. Discard soiled items carefully in an impervious plastic bag.
5. Liberally clean and disinfect area and objects surrounding the contamination with an appropriate disinfectant.
6. Take off gloves, gown, and mask, in that order, and discard before exiting contaminated clean-up area.
7. Place discarded PPE in an impervious plastic bag.
8. Re-glove and transport bag to a secure trash container; do not allow the bag to touch your clothing.
9. Always wash your hands after handling any contaminated material, trash, or waste.

### Sanitizing Equipment and Utensils

- Note: Equipment food-contact surfaces and multiservice utensils must be washed before the sanitizing step.
- Use one of the following solutions:
  - 1) Contact with a solution of 100 ppm available chlorine solution for at least 30 seconds.
  - 2) Contact with a solution of 25 ppm available iodine for at least one minute.
  - 3) Contact with a solution of 200 ppm quaternary ammonium for at least one minute.
  - 4) Contact with any chemical sanitizer that meets the requirements of Section 180.940 of Title 40 of the Code of Federal Regulations when used in accordance with the manufacturer's use directions.

### Other ways to Stop Shigella from Entering your Kitchen

- Ensure produce is properly washed before use.
- Clean and sanitize food contact surfaces.
- Guard against the entry of house flies into the facility.
- Close facility when sewage backs up. Once repairs are complete and surfaces have been cleaned and sanitized you can return to normal kitchen activities.
- Make sure all back-flow prevention devices are in good repair.

## Employee Health Guidelines

All food employees must be knowledgeable of the relationship between personal health and hygiene and food safety. Information on this topic can be found in the California Retail Food Code, Chapter 3 Article 3 – Employee Health.

### The Employees are Responsible for Notifying the Person in Charge

- Notify the Person in Charge (PIC) if you have been diagnosed with a Shigella infection. Be advised that an employee is also required to report the following: Salmonella, Shigella, Enterohemorrhagic or shiga toxin producing E. coli, Hepatitis A, or Entamoeba histolytica. Remember, you should not work with food or utensils if you are sick with gastrointestinal illnesses, especially diarrhea, abdominal cramps, fever and vomiting.

### The Person in Charge is Responsible for Meeting the Following Requirements

- **Report** to the County of San Diego - Department of Environmental Health and Quality when a food employee is diagnosed with Shigella; call (858) 505-6814. Remember that the following illnesses must also be reported: Salmonella, Shigella, Enterohemorrhagic or shiga toxin producing E. coli, Hepatitis A, or Entamoeba histolytica.
- **Report** to the Department of Environmental Health and Quality if **two or more people** are sick with acute gastrointestinal illness; call (858) 505-6814. Acute gastrointestinal illness is diarrhea, either alone or with vomiting, fever or abdominal cramps.
- **Exclude** a food employee from the food facility if diagnosed with Salmonella, Hepatitis A, Shigella, Enterohemorrhagic or shiga toxin producing E. coli, Shigella or Entamoeba histolytica. Only the County of San Diego's Department of Environmental Health and Quality or the Health and Human Services Agency can clear an excluded employee to go back to work.
- **Restrict** a food employee from working with exposed food, clean equipment, clean linens, clean utensils and unwrapped single-service articles if food employee is suffering from symptoms of acute gastrointestinal illness or experiencing persistent coughing, sneezing or nasal discharges. Restrictions can be removed by the Person in Charge when the food employee states they no longer have symptoms of illness.