## TIP SHEET for Shigella Case Investigations

- **Disease:** *Shigella* is a bacterium that causes gastrointestinal illness. Most people experience diarrhea that can be bloody or prolonged (lasting more than 3 days), fever, abdominal cramps, and tenesmus (feeling the need to pass stool even when the bowels are empty). Symptoms generally last 5 to 7 days but can range from a few days to weeks. An estimated 20% of individuals require hospitalization. An increase in extensively drug-resistant *Shigella* has been observed nationally since 2020.

- **Transmission & Incubation Period:** Humans are the natural host for *Shigella* bacteria. Transmission occurs via contact with the feces of an infected person, contaminated objects, ingestion of contaminated food or recreational water, or sexual contact. Individuals become ill by swallowing the bacteria. *Shigella* is not transmitted by animals. Symptoms typically begin 1 to 3 days after exposure but can range from 1 to 7 days.

<table>
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<th>Notification</th>
<th>LBOHs have primary responsibility to investigate cases of <em>Shigella</em> in their jurisdiction. New cases will flow into your “LBOH Notification for Routine Disease” workflow.</th>
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| Get Prepared | - Familiarize yourself with the disease: [MDPH Fact Sheets](#), [MDPH Guide to Surveillance](#)
- Review **foodhandler exclusion criteria** from 105 CMR 300 for cases and their household contacts. [Implementing the Exclusion of Food Handlers with Reportable Conditions](#)
  - **In healthcare:** this includes those who set up trays for patients to eat, feed or assist patients in eating, give oral medications or give mouth/denture care.
  - **In daycare facilities, schools, and community residential programs:** this includes those who prepare food for clients to eat, feed or assist clients in eating, or give oral medications.
- Review demographic and laboratory information available in MAVEN for the case. |
| Contact Ordering Provider | - The name and facility of the ordering provider can be found in the lab tab in the case’s MAVEN event. If ordering provider is a hospital, reach out to the hospital Infection Preventionist
- During call with provider’s office:
  - Confirm case’s contact information, collect additional phone number(s) or email address
  - Obtain symptom onset date and clinical presentation
  - Collect information on any potential exposures identified during visit (e.g., travel)
  - Request case’s occupation and employer, if available
  - Ask if the case has been informed of their diagnosis
- If the ordering provider cannot be reached in a timely manner, proceed to case interview. |
| Contact Case | - Introduce yourself, why you are calling, what you will use information for, and who has access to the information they provide.
- Complete all questions in the Demographic and Clinical question packages.
- Complete all questions in the Risk/Exposure question package for the **7 days prior to symptom onset.**
  - To improve exposure recall of social activities, recreational water exposures, and restaurants visited, encourage the case to look at their work and/or personal calendars, credit card or bank statements, and photos on their phone.
  - “Employed or attend a supervised care setting” should be used to document where a child attends childcare or school.
- Provide education on the disease and guidance on how to prevent further spread to their household members and close contacts (including sexual contacts). |
# Prevent Further Transmission

## Food handlers

- If individual meets the 105 CMR 300 definition of a food handler (see definition in “② Get Prepared”), they must be excluded from food handling duties until meeting clearance criteria:
  - In non-outbreak circumstances: after diarrhea has resolved, **two** negative stool specimens produced 24 hours apart, and 48 hours after completion of any antimicrobial therapy. [Implementing the Exclusion of Food Handlers with Reportable Conditions](#)

## Childcare

### Exclusion:
- Most staff in childcare settings are considered food handlers. Staff should be excluded following food handler criteria above.
- Children should be excluded until diarrhea has resolved and **two** negative stool specimens are produced; specimens should be collected at least 24 hours apart and 48 hours after completion of any antimicrobials.

### Identify if there is an outbreak at the facility:
- Contact the facility (or the local health department where the facility is located, if outside your jurisdiction) to find out if others are experiencing similar illness.

## Long-term care

### Exclusion & precautions:
- Staff who meet the definition of a food handler should be excluded following food handler criteria above.
- Residents should be placed on standard plus contact precautions for the duration of their illness and remain on precautions until a negative stool specimen is produced. [Infection Prevention in Long Term Care: Gastrointestinal Illness](#)

### Identify if there is an outbreak at the facility:
- Contact the facility (or the local health department where the facility is located, if outside your jurisdiction) to find out if others are experiencing similar illness.

## Notify DPH as Needed

- **Suspected outbreaks are reportable to MDPH within 24 hours.** If case investigation indicates that two or more people from different households became ill with similar symptoms after a common exposure, notify the Division of Epidemiology: (617) 983-6800.
- Create a MAVEN foodborne illness complaint if the case reports eating food away from home with sufficient details available (name of establishment, location, and date of purchase/consumption at a minimum; ideally also item(s) consumed).

## Other Notes

- It is recommended that three call attempts are made at different times of day to reach a case for interview. Consider texting or emailing a case requesting a call back if they are not responsive.
  - If a case cannot be reached, collect the following from the ordering provider before closing out the case: symptom onset and clinical presentation, occupation and employer, and any exposure information available in the medical notes.
- Completion of all exposure questions in the MAVEN Risk Question Package is essential for detecting outbreaks and preventing further transmission.

## Additional Resources

- May 2022 webinar: Introduction to Enteric (Gastrointestinal Illness) Disease Case Investigations [Slides, Recording](#)
- August 2022 webinar: Overview and Updates to Cryptosporidium and Shigella Case Investigations [Slides, Recording](#)
- [CDC: Shigella Infection Among Gay, Bisexual, and Other Men Who Have Sex with Men](#)
- MDPH Division of Epidemiology: (617) 983-6800