

Gay Men and Shigellosis



What is Shigellosis?

Shigellosis is a disease that causes stomach cramps, fever, diarrhea and sometimes bloody diarrhea.

What causes Shigellosis?

Shigellosis is caused by the Shigella bacterium. Shigella is found in feces (shit).

Who gets it?

Anyone can get Shigellosis. Gay men get Shigellosis at higher rates than others. People with a weakened immune system get more sick than others.

How do you get it?

You can get Shigellosis when feces comes in contact with your mouth. This can happen with oral/anal sex play. This can happen when you use your fingers or hand for anal sex play and then touch your mouth. Even microscopic amounts of feces that get into your mouth can cause Shigellosis.

How can I avoid Shigella?

Play safely. In addition to safe sex guidelines to prevent HIV, maintain good hygiene. Wash every part of your body that is sexual with soap and water before, after and between sex play. Use condoms or other kinds of barriers like dental dams, latex gloves or plastic wrap and be aware of what body parts may have come into contact with feces during sex play. Wash them with soap and water. Use condoms with sex toys, and discard the condoms after use.

What do I do if I think I have Shigellosis?

- *If you think you have Shigellosis, see your doctor.*
- *Inform your partners.*
- *Wash your hands a lot.*
- *Don't have sex until 7 days after symptoms end.*
- *Talk with a medical provider about what you can do to reduce your risk.*



• **Gay men get Shigellosis at rates higher than others**


• **Shigellosis is a disease caused when feces/shit comes in contact with your mouth**

• **Maintain good hygiene! Wash your hands with soap and water -- often -- and especially before, after and between sex play**

Don't have a doctor?
Call the Health Info Line
(800) 427-8700

Got Questions?
Contact Us
(213) 240-7941

Or visit our website:
www.lapublichealth.org

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**This
could
get
really
nasty**