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City of Milwaukee Health Department Documents Increase in Shigellosis in City

Health officials remind day cares and summer recreational programs of symptoms and control measures

MILWAUKEE – The City of Milwaukee Health Department (MHD) has received a number of confirmed reports of Shigellosis in both adults and children over the past several months. More than 62 cases have been reported already in 2014 compared to 11 cases in all of 2013. Many of the confirmed reports have been in city day care and school or group settings.

Shigellosis is caused by a bacteria and results in stomach cramping, diarrhea, fever, nausea, or vomiting. It is primarily spread person-to-person, but can also be spread through contaminated water, food, or on surfaces such as diaper changing tables. Some individuals infected with Shigella bacteria may not show symptoms but can still pass the illness to others. High-risk settings include child care facilities, schools and other group settings in which toddlers are not fully toilet-trained.

Most symptoms of Shigellosis resolve within a week. However, severe and persistent cases can be treated with antibiotics.

Persons with symptoms, especially in high-risk transmission occupations such as food handling or health care, should stay at home until fully recovered.

Health officials remind the public that there are ways to prevent Shigella infection, including:

- Washing hands with soap and water carefully and frequently, especially after going to the bathroom and changing diapers, and before preparing or eating foods or beverages
- Disposing of soiled diapers properly and disinfecting diaper changing areas after using them
- Keeping children with diarrhea out of child care settings until symptoms are resolved
- Supervising the hand-washing of toddlers and small children after they use toilet facilities

Further information is available on the MHD website at www.milwaukee.gov/health.

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Think Health. Act Now!

