City of Long Beach
Working Together to Serve

Memorandum

Date: October 19, 2018

To: Patrick H. West, City Manager

From: Kelly Colopy, Director of Health and Human Services

For: Mayor and Members of the City Council

Subject: Health Department Responds to Outbreak of Shigellosis among Persons Experiencing Homelessness

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The Health and Human Services Department (Health Department) is currently investigating an outbreak of Shigellosis among persons experiencing homelessness (PEH) in Long Beach. The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) is assisting with the investigation. Currently, 21 cases have been reported, of which 9 are laboratory-confirmed, and 12 have symptoms but have no laboratory results available. Eight of these cases have been hospitalized and several more have visited emergency departments but were not admitted. Upon interviewing these cases, it was discovered that several more PEH in Long Beach had reported similar symptoms in the past month. Ill cases have been centered around the Los Angeles Riverbed, Drake Park, Cesar Chavez Park, and Downtown Long Beach.

Shigella, a bacteria that causes a diarrheal illness called Shigellosis, causes severe diarrhea, that is often bloody, fever, and abdominal cramps. *Shigella* is very contagious and is spread through exposure to infected feces or objects contaminated with infected feces (e.g., sharing personal items with an infected person), consumption of contaminated food or liquid, untreated water that has been contaminated with *Shigella*, and exposure to the feces of an infected person during sexual contact. Infected people usually recover without treatment; however, people who have other underlying medical conditions may develop severe infections and dehydration, leading to hospitalization and even death.

Shigellosis can be prevented by washing hands with soap and water after using the bathroom, before eating, and before preparing food for others, and by avoiding fecal exposure during sex.

The Health Department's outbreak response broadly involves education and outreach, cleaning, sanitizing, and monitoring, and has included significant collaboration with the Department of Parks, Recreation, and Marine (PRM). The response includes:

Education and Outreach:

- Multiple joint field outreach efforts with the Epidemiology Program, Public Health Emergency Management, Environmental Health, the Multi-Service Center, Quality of Life, and HEART teams to conduct case finding and education.

- Materials and outbreak notifications distributed to homeless service providers throughout Long Beach.
- Educational signage designed to prevent disease transmission posted at Drake and Cesar Chavez Parks.
- Hand sanitizing wipes distributed to encampment areas and PEH throughout the Downtown Long Beach area.

Cleaning and Sanitizing:

- The Health Department contracted Ocean Blue to conduct deep cleaning and power washing of Drake and Cesar Chavez Parks restrooms on Friday, October 12, 2018.
- PRM installation of soap dispensers in Drake and Cesar Chavez Parks restrooms to allow for proper hand hygiene.
- Environmental Health and PRM working with ABM Cleaning, (contracted cleaners through PRM), to develop and review cleaning protocol to ensure disinfection is conducted properly.
- PRM working with ABM to ensure proper cleaning and sanitizing is occurring at least twice daily at the Drake and Cesar Chavez Parks restrooms.

Monitoring:

- A Provider Alert notifying healthcare providers, hospitals, and urgent care centers of the outbreak was distributed, providing guidance and advising facilities to immediately notify the Epidemiology Program of any suspect cases of shigellosis among PEH.
- Outreach workers from the Multi-Service Center and other homeless outreach providers in Long Beach have been notified of the outbreak and are calling the Epidemiology Program if they notice ill people in the field to ensure they receive proper medical care.

The Health Department will continue to monitor for additional cases, and is working to stop the outbreak from spreading further by providing education, hand sanitizing wipes, and implementing stricter cleaning protocols and supplies (soap) for public restrooms to prevent further transmission from occurring. The Health Department's plan is flexible and will adjust the response as the status of the outbreak evolves.

Attached for your reference are: Shigella informational flyer, Shigella fact sheet, and cleaning recommendations. For more information on *Shigella*, visit: www.longbeach.gov/shigella, or contact Emerging Infectious Disease Response Coordinator, Emily Holman, at emily.holman@longbeach.gov or at (562) 570-4344.

Attachments:

- Shigella flyer
- Shigella FAQ
- Cleaning Recommendations

cc: CHARLES PARKIN, CITY ATTORNEY
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DEPARTMENT HEADS

Shigella *(shih-GEHL-uh)*

a highly contagious diarrheal illness

LONG BEACH HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

SHIGELLA CAUSES DIARRHEA, FEVER, AND STOMACH PAIN

Shigella is a germ that spreads easily and causes:

- Diarrhea (may be bloody)
- Fever
- Stomach pain
- Dehydration (e.g., dry mouth, dark yellow urine, dizziness)

CONTACT A HEALTHCARE PROVIDER FOR TESTING & TREATMENT IF YOU THINK YOU MAY HAVE *SHIGELLA.*

HOW *SHIGELLA* SPREADS

Shigella germs can spread through tiny, invisible bits of poop (stool) that people touch and then accidentally ingest. These germs can also contaminate food and water.

This can happen when someone has *Shigella* and:

Doesn't wash their hands after using the toilet.

Prepares food for others.

Contaminates water.

Has sex.

HOW TO AVOID GETTING IT & SPREADING IT

Anyone who is suspected to have *Shigella* should not work in food handling, patient care, or in childcare settings until they've been tested for *Shigella* by a healthcare provider. If you **have** *Shigella* and work in these occupations, you must be cleared by Public Health before returning to work.

Wash hands frequently with soap and water, especially after using the toilet, before cooking or eating, after changing diapers.

Don't prepare food for others while ill with diarrhea.

Avoid swallowing water from ponds, lakes, or untreated swimming pools.

Avoid having sex (vaginal, anal & oral) for at least one week (longer is better) after your partner recovers.

WHO IS MOST AT RISK

- People experiencing homelessness
- Men who have sex with men
- People with weakened immune systems from illness or medical treatment
- Travelers to developing countries
- Young children

TO REPORT *SHIGELLA:*

If you are diagnosed with *Shigella* or if you have questions about *Shigella,* call 562.570.4302
www.longbeach.gov/shigella

Shigella *(shih-GEHL-uh)*

Enfermedad intestinal (diarrea) muy contagiosa

LONG BEACH HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

LA *SHIGELLA* CAUSA DIARREA, FIEBRE Y DOLOR DE ESTÓMAGO

La *Shigella* es un germen que es transmitido facilmente y causa:

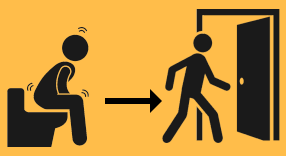
- Diarrea
  (puede ser con sangre)
- Fiebre
- Dolor de estómago
- Deshidratación
  (boca seca, orina amarilla oscura, mareos)

PÓNGASE EN CONTACTO CON UN PROVEEDOR DE SALUD PARA HACERSE PRUEBAS Y RECIBIR TRATAMIENTO SI PIENSA QUE TIENE *SHIGELLA*.

CÓMO SE PROPAGA LA *SHIGELLA*

Los gérmenes de *Shigella* se pueden propagar a través de pedacitos minúsculos e invisibles de excremento (heces) que la gente toca e ingiere accidentalmente. Estos gérmenes también pueden contaminar los alimentos y el agua.

Esto puede suceder cuando alguien tiene Shigella y:



No se lava las manos después de usar el inodoro.

Prepara comida para otros.

Contamina el agua.

Tiene relaciones sexuales.

CÓMO EVITAR CONTAGIARSE Y TRANSMITIR

Cualquier persona que sospeche que tiene *Shigella* no debe trabajar en el manejo de alimentos, atención a pacientes, o en guarderías hasta que se haya hecho los análisis de *Shigella* con un proveedor de atención de salud. Si usted tiene *Shigella* y tiene estos trabajos, debe recibir la aprobación del Departamento de Salud Pública antes de volver al trabajo.

Lavarse las manos con frecuencia con agua y jabón, especialmente después de usar el inodoro, antes de cocinar o comer, o después de cambiar pañales.

No prepare comida para otras personas mientras este enfermo con diarrea.

Evite tragar agua de estanques, lagos o piscinas sin tratamiento.

Evite tener relaciones sexuales (vaginales, anales y orales) por un mínimo de una semana (cuanto más espere mejor) después de que su pareja se recupere de la diarrea.

QUIÉN TIENE MÁS RIESGO

- Personas indigentes
- Hombres que tienen relaciones sexuales con hombres
- Personas con sistemas inmunológicos
- debilitados debido a enfermedades o tratamientos médicos
- Personas que viajan a países en desarrollo
- Niños pequeños

TO REPORT *SHIGELLA:*

Si es diagnosticado con la infección de *Shigella*, o si tienen preguntas sobre *Shigella*, por favor llamen al 562.570.4302
www.longbeach.gov/shigella

SHIGELLA FACT SHEET

WHAT IS SHIGELLOSIS?

Shigellosis is a diarrheal illness caused by the bacteria *Shigella*. Shigellosis can be quite severe, especially in young children, the elderly, and those with weakened immune systems.

WHO CAN GET *SHIGELLA*?

Anyone can get *Shigella*, but those who are at the highest risk include:

- People with limited access to washing facilities who live in crowded areas, such as persons experiencing homelessness
- Men who have sex with men
- Young children in child care settings
- Travelers to developing countries

HOW IS *SHIGELLA* SPREAD?

Infected persons carry *Shigella* in their feces (poop) while they are sick and can spread the disease. Ingesting even a small amount of contaminated feces can cause someone to become ill. Ways that people become infected with *Shigella* include:

- Unknown exposure to infected feces or objects that have infected feces on them (i.e. using contaminated utensils or sharing personal items with an infected person).
- Consumption of food or liquids contaminated by an infected person; food items that have been sources of outbreaks have included vegetables that are usually eaten raw, raw oysters, and commercially prepared food products.
- Swallowing untreated recreational water contaminated with *Shigella;* this includes lakes, pools, and water park play fountains.
- Exposure to the feces of an infected person during sexual contact.

WHAT ARE SYMPTOMS OF SHIGELLOSIS?

Symptoms usually begin 1-2 days after exposure and can include:

- Diarrhea (can be bloody)
- Fever
- Stomach pain

HOW IS *SHIGELLA* TREATED?

People with mild shigellosis usually recover without treatment. It is important to drink enough fluids to prevent dehydration. For more severe infections, a health care provider can prescribe an appropriate antibiotic to treat shigellosis. Antibiotic-resistant *Shigella* has become increasingly common; therefore, health care providers should make treatment decisions based on culture results.

HOW CAN YOU PREVENT SHIGELLOSIS?

- Wash hands with soap and water carefully and frequently, especially after using the bathroom or after changing diapers.
- Always wash hands before preparing foods or beverages and eating.
- Keep children with diarrhea out of child care settings.
- Do not prepare foods for others if you have diarrhea.
- Do not take part in recreational water activities (such as swimming) if you have diarrhea.
- Carefully wash vegetables that will be eaten raw.
- When traveling in developing countries, drink only treated or boiled water and eat only cooked hot foods or fruits you peel yourself.
- Avoid fecal exposure during sex.

WHERE CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT SHIGELLOSIS?

Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services:
Longbeach.gov/shigella

California Department of Public Health:
https://www.cdph.ca.gov/Programs/CID/DCDC/Pages/Shigellosis.aspx

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention:
https://www.cdc.gov/shigella/

If you have any additional questions contact the Epidemiology Program at (562) 570-4302.

City of Long Beach Department of Health and Human Services
Epidemiology/Communicable Disease Control Program
2525 Grand Avenue, Long Beach, CA 90815 I Phone: (562) 570-4302
Website: http://longbeach.gov/health
Last Updated: Oct 2018

CITY OF LONG BEACH

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
BUREAU OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

2525 GRAND AVENUE ROOM 220 • LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90815 • (562) 570-4132
WWW.LONGBEACH.GOV/HEALTH/EH

Daily Cleaning Best Management Practices: Guidelines for Cleaning and Disinfecting Public Restrooms

Cleaning - removes germs, dirt, and impurities from surfaces or objects. Cleaning works by using soap (or detergent) and water to physically remove germs from surfaces. This process does not necessarily kill germs, but by removing them, it lowers their numbers and the risk of spreading infection.

Disinfecting - kills germs on surfaces or objects. Disinfecting works by using chemicals to kill germs on surfaces or objects. This process does not necessarily clean dirty surfaces or remove germs, but by killing germs on a surface after cleaning, it can further lower the risk of spreading infection.

Recommended routine daily steps for ABM or any Janitorial Contractors:

- ***Clean* (using soap & water) from top to bottom:** Work from high to low, starting with stall partition tops, walls and mirrors before moving to countertops, fixtures, and floors. Then rinse surfaces with water to remove cleaning products and suspended debris.

- ***Disinfect* (using an EPA approved disinfectant) from top to bottom**: Work from high to low, starting with stall partition tops, walls and mirrors before moving to countertops, fixtures, and floors. apply enough disinfecting solution to thoroughly cover the surface. Let the solution stand for the contact time given on the label. Let the surface air dry before using.

- ***Employee Protection***: Pay close attention to hazard warnings and directions on product labels. Cleaning products and disinfectants often call for the use of gloves or eye protection. For example, gloves should always be worn to protect your hands when working with bleach solutions. Do not mix cleaners and disinfectants unless the labels indicate it is safe to do so. Combining certain products (such as chlorine bleach and ammonia cleaners) can result in serious injury or death. Ensure that custodial staff and others who use cleaners and disinfectants read and understand all instruction labels and understand safe and appropriate use. This might require that instructional materials and training be provided in other languages.

- Provide routine custodial staff refresher training and monitoring to ensure proper cleaning and disinfecting procedures are conducted.

The potential for germ transmission in public restrooms will always be high. However, by implementing thorough cleaning and disinfecting protocols that focus on signs of contamination, such as unpleasant odors and visible stains or soils, and addressing key surfaces where germs are most common, cleaning professionals can help provide a healthy environment for building occupants and visitors.

SOURCE: Centers for Disease and Control