

Taney County Health Department



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HEALTH ADVISORY

INCREASED INCIDENCE OF SHIGELLA (SHIGELLOSIS)

Taney County Health Department epidemiologist Robert Niezgoda announced the department has received reports of 26 confirmed cases of shigellosis since October 2009, with an increase reported in the past two weeks. Shigellosis, a diarrheal disease caused by the bacteria *Shigella*, has been identified in several areas around the county.

The 26 confirmed cases reflect a significant increase of *Shigella*. From 2005 to September 2009 there was only one case reported in Taney County. To date there are no links that connect the cases to any single source of transmission. Water supplies, restaurants and daycare facilities have not been identified as a link to the confirmed cases. The majority of the confirmed cases have been children ages 15 months to 10 years.

The most important measure to prevent new cases of Shigellosis is careful and frequent hand washing with warm water and soap after using the toilet, changing a diaper and before eating. Anyone who prepares food should wash hands with soap and water before preparing food. A person who is experiencing *Shigella*-like symptoms should not go to school, daycare or work (especially those who work in the food service industry). The Department has sent information on preventive measures to Skaggs Regional Medical Center Infectious Disease nurse, schools, food service establishments, and daycare facilities.

Shigella causes diarrhea that may contain blood or mucus, and can cause severe dehydration, particularly among the very young and the elderly. Symptoms may include fever, nausea, vomiting, or abdominal cramps. Anyone experiencing *Shigella*-like symptoms should contact their medical provider. Some cases of *Shigella* may require treatment with antibiotics.

For more information, please contact Robert Niezgoda or Kim Foster at (417) 334-4544.