



# Media Release

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## ***Shigella* Outbreak in Yakima County**

**Yakima, WA-** Yakima County is experiencing a *Shigella* outbreak with 72 cases between the beginning of the year through October 16, compared to 10 cases over the same time period from last year. As social gatherings continue to occur, the Yakima Health District is urging the community to utilize preventative measures to reduce the spread of *Shigella* illnesses.

*Shigella* is a bacteria that can spread easily from one person to another and it only takes a small amount of *Shigella* to cause illness. Individuals can get infected by swallowing *Shigella*, such as:

- Touching surfaces or items contaminated with *Shigella* bacteria from someone with an infection and then touching your mouth
- Eating food prepared by someone with a *Shigella* infection

Most people with *Shigella* infection experience:

- Diarrhea that can be bloody or prolonged (lasting more than 3 days)
- Fever
- Stomach pain
- Feeling the need to pass stool even when the bowels are empty

Symptoms usually start 1-2 days after an infection and last 7 days. Individuals who are experiencing severe or persistent symptoms should seek medical attention immediately.

Individuals who are experiencing *Shigella* symptoms are recommended to follow these preventative measures to reduce the spread *Shigella*:

- Wash hands often and thoroughly, especially before eating and after using the bathroom or changing diapers.
- Clean and sanitize work areas frequently.
- Do not prepare food if you are sick or share food with anyone.

- Do not swim.
- Stay home from school or from healthcare, food service, or childcare jobs while sick.

**Quote**

“*Shigella* spreads easily from person to person and with 72 cases in Yakima County so far this year it is an important reminder to be vigilant and utilize preventative measures. As upcoming holidays and gatherings take place, remember to always wash your hands, and stay home if you are sick. Together, we can utilize preventative measures to reduce the further spread of *Shigella* in our communities.” -Melissa Sixberry, Director of Disease Control, Yakima Health District

**Additional Information:**

[CDC: Shigella](#)

[CDC: Information for Food Service Workers and Managers](#)

[CDC: Food Safety](#)

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