



Charlie Crist
Governor

Ana M. Viamonte Ros, M.D., MPH
Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 10, 2010

Contact: Candy Sims, Public Information Officer
(954) 467-4784 – (954) 895-5745 cell

**BROWARD COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT ISSUES HEALTH ADVISORY
FOR PREVENTION OF SHIGELLOSIS**
Shigellosis – Shigella Bacteria infection continues to show increase in the County.

BROWARD COUNTY, FL – Broward County Health Department officials would like to advise parents, schools, daycare centers, summer camp operators, parks and recreation centers to take precautionary action to prevent the spread of Shigellosis. Shigellosis is a highly contagious form of diarrhea caused by Shigella bacteria. Shigella can spread through person to person contact and may cause severe diarrhea, fever and stomach cramps.

“Our reported cases continue to rise, so it is important that everyone remain vigilant in stopping the spread of this infection,” said Dr. Paula Thaqi, M.D., Director of the Broward County Health Department. “We now have a total of 81 reported cases so far this year – compared to 43 cases this same time last year,” she said. “Our main concerns are children 1 to 9 years old – the age span where Shigella bacteria can be easily spread.”

Parents of children or anyone with symptoms of Shigellosis should contact their health care provider for diagnosis and treatment. **Careful attention to *handwashing* is the single most important measure to decrease transmission of Shigella bacteria.**

More...

More prevention recommendations:

- Wash hands with soap carefully and frequently, especially after going to the bathroom, after changing diapers, and before preparing foods or beverages.
- Dispose of soiled diapers properly
- Disinfect diaper changing areas after using them.
- Keep children with diarrhea out of child care settings.
- Supervise handwashing of toddlers and small children after they use the toilet.
- Do not prepare food for others while ill with diarrhea
- Avoid swallowing water from ponds, lakes, or untreated pools.

Symptoms may last from 48 to 72 hours, frequently marked by fever, stomach cramps and bloody stools. Although anyone can become ill if exposed, most cases are occurring in school aged children and children in daycare. Children with Shigellosis should be excluded from daycare, school or other group activities until symptoms have ceased and laboratory cultures test negative for Shigella bacteria.

For more information visit <http://www.cdc.gov/nczved/divisions/dfbmd/diseases/shigellosis/> or www.browardchd.org.

###