



Nov. 20, 2015

Dear Parents, Students and Staff

There has been a confirmed case of Shigellosis at your school. The affected person is receiving treatment. Shigellosis is an infectious disease caused by a group of bacteria called Shigella. Most infections occur because of poor basic hygiene and hand-washing habits: when the germ passes from the stool or soiled fingers of one person to the mouth of another person.

Shigella infections also may be acquired from eating contaminated food. Contaminated food may look and smell normal. Food may become contaminated by infected food handlers who forget to wash their hands with soap and water after using the bathroom.

Signs and symptoms include:

- Diarrhea
- Fever
- Stomach cramps

Some people who are infected may not show symptoms, but they can still pass the Shigella bacteria to others. Your doctor's office can do special tests to tell which type of Shigella the person has and which antibiotics, if any, would be best to treat it.

Transmission of shigellosis can be greatly reduced using the following strategies:

- Thorough and frequent hand washing, especially after using the bathroom
- Washing your hands before and after eating

If you notice any symptoms, please:

- Contact your physician
- Keep your child at home
- Notify your school

If you have any questions, please call the nurse at your child's school, the Rockford Public Schools Health Services Office at 815-966-5254, or the Winnebago County Health Department at 815-720-4050. To learn more about shigellosis, visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: www.cdc.gov/shigella

Sincerely,

Mary Fisher, RN
Health Services Supervisor