

Bacillary Dysentery

Why have you been contacted by The Environmental Health Service?

We have a legal obligation to investigate causes of food borne illness, and will also advise on precautions that should be taken. We will also investigate the suspected source of contamination (e.g. food and food businesses) and try to ensure that no further cases occur.

What is Viral Bacillary Dysentery?

Dysentery is an infection of the digestive system. The illness is caused by a bacteria called shigella. It is highly infectious as the number of bacteria required to cause illness is low. Anyone can become infected, but children under 10 years of age are particularly vulnerable. It has an incubation period of 1- 3 days and symptoms often last for several days and sometimes 2-3 weeks.

Further information:

Should you require any further information regarding Bacillary Dysentery, please contact:

The Food Safety Section,
Environmental Health Service,
South Holland District Council,
Council Offices, Priory Road,
Spalding, Lincs.
PE11 2XE.

Telephone (01775) 761161.
www.sholland.gov.uk



Where do the bacteria come from and how are they spread?

The source of dysentery infection is the faeces of infected patients and carriers, and therefore anyone coming into contact with objects that have been contaminated with faeces is at risk.

Spread is by the faecal-oral route, either:

- a) by direct person to person contact involving hand to mouth transfer from contaminated materials and surfaces or
- b) indirectly through eating contaminated food.

Anyone can catch dysentery but most cases occur in children. dysentery is VERY infectious and will rapidly spread around nursery and primary schools.

Once children have caught the disease at school, studies have shown that almost half of them will then pass on the infection to members of their own family.

SYMPTOMS

- " Sudden attack of vomiting
- " Profuse diarrhoea, sometimes with blood and mucus
- " Fever
- " Tired and "Washed Out" feeling
- " Nausea
- " Stomach pains

What should I do to prevent further spread?

1. Good personal hygiene

Thorough hand washing using hot water, preferably bactericidal soap together with thorough drying each time after using the toilet and immediately prior to any handling, preparation or serving of food. Children must be supervised to thoroughly wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating foods. Use disposable towels.

2. Toilet hygiene

Disinfect the toilet at least once a day, and wipe hand contact points such as toilet seat, door handles and taps etc. with a bleach solution at the correct strength. Disinfection is particularly appropriate after the toilet has been used by an infected person.

3. Soiled clothing and bed linen

This should be washed in a domestic washing machine using the hot cycle. As much faecal material as possible should be flushed down the toilet. Rubber gloves should be worn and hands thoroughly washed afterwards.

4. Food Handlers

Persons working with food or in health care facilities who know or suspect that they or a member of their household are suffering from Dysentery infection must inform their employer immediately.

5. Whilst you are suffering from diarrhoea you should not go to work/school. Advice concerning your return to work/school should be sought from the Environmental services Department.

6. Washing up

Rinse all crockery, knives and spoons etc. with very hot water after washing up and allow to air dry.