

## Shigellosis Levels in McLennan County Continue to Increase

*City of Bellmead*

*City of Beverly Hills*

*City of Bruceville-Eddy*

*City of Crawford*

*City of Gholsen*

*City of Golinda*

*City of Hallsburg*

*City of Hewitt*

*City of Lacy-Lakeview*

*City of Leroy*

*City of Lorena*

*City of Mart*

*City of McGregor*

*City of Moody*

*City of Riesel*

*City of Robinson*

*City of Ross*

*City of Waco*

*City of West*

*City of Woodway*

*McLennan County*

(August 4, 2014) – The Waco-McLennan County Public Health District is investigating higher than normal levels of Shigellosis cases in the county. Since June, the Health District has seen a continual rise in the number of cases. The total for the year is 84 cases, with half of those cases occurring within the last 2 months. There were 27 cases in 2013.

Shigellosis is an infectious disease caused by a group of bacteria called Shigella. Most people who are infected with Shigella develop diarrhea, fever, vomiting and stomach cramps starting a day or two after they are exposed to the bacteria.

At this time, there is no indication of any contamination in group settings or other public locations; however, 75% of the confirmed cases have been in children 10 years of age or under. Children, especially toddlers aged 2 to 4, are most likely to get Shigellosis and can spread the illness to family members.

### **Some tips for preventing the spread of Shigellosis:**

- 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 hand washing 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.
- Do not allow children with diarrhea symptoms to share bathwater or go swimming with others until the symptoms are clear.

Persons who think they may have been exposed to Shigella or have Shigellosis should contact their family medical professional. Shigellosis can only be diagnosed by a doctor. Antibiotics are often prescribed for treatment.

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