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Your Health. Our Work.

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Release Date: September 12, 2016 **End Date:** September 30, 2016

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RE: Shigella

Genesee County is seeing an increase in *Shigella*, a bacteria that causes gastrointestinal illness which includes mild to severe diarrhea. Other symptoms include fever, nausea, vomiting, cramps, and stools containing blood and/or mucus. *Shigella* cases are on the rise across Michigan.

Shigella is spread from person-to-person through a fecal-oral route. That is to say, the bacteria leaves an infected person's body in the stool and are spread by contaminated hands, surfaces, food, or water. The spread of *Shigella* bacteria can be stopped by practicing good hand hygiene. Proper hand washing takes at least 20 seconds with soap and warm water, including cleaning under the fingernails. This should be done after using the bathroom and before preparing or eating food. It is also important to shower often to maintain proper personal hygiene. Those who are experiencing diarrhea should not handle food for others until they are found to be clear of the bacteria.

Please watch for symptoms in your child and other family members. If symptoms occur, consult your primary care physician or health care provider. As always, children and adults who are ill should stay home until all of their symptoms are gone and stools are normal for at least 48 hours.

For more information regarding *Shigella* or other gastrointestinal illnesses, feel free to visit our website at www.gchd.us or call the Genesee County Health Department at (810) 257-1017.

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