



Durham Region Health Department FAX about...

For Health Care Professionals



XDR Shigella - Possible Sexual Transmission

Public Health Ontario (PHO) is monitoring trends related to extensively drug resistant (XDR) *Shigella* cases in Ontario. To date PHO is aware of ten cases (nine in Toronto and one in Waterloo) from March 29, 2022 to Jan 31, 2023. Sexual contact between men who have sex with men (gbMSM) has been identified as the predominant mode of transmission. This XDR *Shigella* strain is currently resistant to the following five antimicrobials: ampicillin, fluoroquinolones, third-generation cephalosporins, azithromycin, and trimethoprim-sulfamethoxazole.

Shigellosis is caused by a bacteria of the genus *Shigella*. There are four pathogenic species within the genus: *Shigella dysenteriae* (also known as serogroup A), *Shigella flexneri* (also known as serogroup B), *Shigella boydii* (also known as serogroup C) and *Shigella sonnei* (also known as serogroup D). The infectious dose is as low as 10 to 100 organisms.

The primary mode of transmission is fecal-oral and this includes ingestion of contaminated food or water and through sexual contact. Risk of transmission increases for individuals engaging in anal-oral sex and in settings where personal hygiene is limited, such as in daycare centres.

Recommended actions for clinicians

- Take a sexual history if shigellosis is suspected
- Clients with concerns for sexually transmitted proctocolitis or enteritis should be tested for other STIs and bloodborne infections, including HIV, syphilis, gonorrhea, chlamydia, hepatitis B and hepatitis C at exposed sites.
- Access the PHO website for the [test information for enteric bacteria](#).

Shigellosis is a reportable disease in Ontario. Please continue to report any cases of Shigellosis to the Durham Region Health Department:

- Phone: 905-668-2020 or 1-800-841-2729 ext. 7369 (press option 2)
- Confidential Fax: 905-666-1833
- After Hours Phone: 905-576-9991 or 1-800-372-1104
- Access the Notification Form for Diseases of Public Health Significance at www.durham.ca/hcp (under Forms, Reporting).

March 15, 2023

